

MORGAN COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION



2015-2019 MASTER PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board

Joe Tutterrow, President
County Council Appointment
Term: 4 years (ends 12-31-15)

Craig Fenneman
County Council Appointment
term: 4 years (ends 12-31-16)

Joni James
Soil & Water Appointment
term: 4 years (ends 12-31-17)

Gary Swaim, Vice President
Circuit Judge Appointment
term: 4 years (ends 12-31-15)

Emma Alkire
County Extension Appointment
term: 4 years (ends 12-31-17)

Deb Verley, Administrative Assistant
(NOT a board member)
180 S. Main Street, Suite 112
Martinsville, IN 46151
email: dverley@morgancounty.in.gov

Greg Howard, Secretary Recorder
County Commissioners Appointment
term: 4 years (ends 12-31-15)

Tammy Payton
Circuit Judge Appointment
term: 4 years (ends 12-31-17)

Morgan County Commissioners

Norman Voyles, President
Martinsville, IN 46151

Brian Goss
Paragon, IN 46166

Don Adams
Mooresville, IN 46158

Morgan County Council

Kenneth (Kenny) Hale
Martinsville, IN 46151

Vickie Kivett
Martinsville, IN 46151

Jeff Quyle
Camby, IN 46113

Bryan Collier
Martinsville, IN 46151

Robert (Bob) O'Neal
Martinsville, IN 46151

Paul Prather
Martinsville, IN 46151

Ryan Goodwin
Mooresville, IN 46158

Prepared By

Green 3 LLC
1104 Prospect Street
Indianapolis, IN 46203

g r e e n • 3



MORGAN COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION 2015-2019 MASTER PLAN

Commissioned by
Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board

Adopted
2015



RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE FIVE-YEAR MASTER PLAN

RESOLUTION

Adopting the Five-Year Master Plan

OF THE PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
OF MORGAN COUNTY, INDIANA
APPROVING THE UPDATED MORGAN COUNTY
2015-2019 PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board is the duly appointed and acting for Morgan County, Indiana pursuant to I.C. 36-10-3-1-et seq; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Indiana statute, the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board has created a 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Master Plan which was approved by resolution on the 1st day of April of 2015; and

WHEREAS, Morgan County has duly published notice of public hearing on the updated Master Plan pursuant to statute; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board is to create and responsibly manage a county-wide system of parks, open space, and cultural resources, and to provide recreational, cultural, and educational programs based on these resources for the use and enjoyment of Morgan County residents; and

WHEREAS, the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board seeks Federal, State, and local grant funds to augment its limited financial resources; and

WHEREAS, the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board needs a plan of action to establish policies, assess community needs for recreational and leisure activities and evaluate current conditions of facilities to meet the changing needs and wants of the community; and

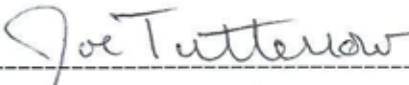
WHEREAS, the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board feels that it is in the best interest of Morgan County, Indiana, to approve the updated Morgan County 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Master Plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board accept the provisions and recommendations and officially accept the plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the foregoing updated Morgan County 2015-2019 Parks & Recreation Master Plan shall be consulted and utilized as applicable in all matters before the Morgan County Park and Recreation Board.

Adopted this 1st day of April, 2015

MORGAN COUNTY PARK & RECREATION BOARD


Joe Tutterrow, President


Gary Swaim, Vice President

ATTESTED BY: 
Greg Howard, Recording Secretary

SECTION 504 ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE

**ASSURANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE WITH:
ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT of 1968 (As Amended);
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (As Amended);
AND TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990
(As Amended)**

The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board of Directors (Applicant) has read the guidelines for compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (As Amended); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (As Amended); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (As Amended) and will comply with the applicable requirements of these Acts.

SIGNATURE Joseph Tutterow
APPLICANT PRESIDENT

Joseph Tutterow
(President's printed name)

SIGNATURE Gary Howard

Gary Howard
(Secretary's printed name)

DATE 5/01/2015



TABLE OF CONTENTS

11 Plan Summary Plan Purpose and Objectives Mission, Vision, and Purpose of the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board	59 Recreation Trends & Needs Trails and Trail-Related Facilities Health and Wellness Natural Resource-Based Recreation Local Parks and Recreation Use Accessibility Recreation Needs Analysis
15 Context of the Plan Planning Area Natural Landscape Features Historic and Cultural Features	63 Organization and Funding Analysis Organization Structure Budget Review
23 Defining the Constituency & Its Needs Population Distribution Employment and Education Transportation Conclusions and Recommendations	67 Strategic Action Plan
33 Parks and Recreation System Management Structure & Staffing Facilities Inventory Accessibility and Universal Design Recreation Programs and Events Progress Since the Last Plan Conclusions and Recommendations	71 Grants and Funding Opportunities
41 Local and Regional Plans Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization Regional Pedestrian Plan Morgan County Greenways Plan Morgan County Comprehensive Plan Conclusions and Recommendations	75 Appendices A: Park Inventory Sheets B: Focus Groups C: Community Recreation Demand Survey D: Public Meeting E: Base Map F: Waverly Park Plan Map
53 Public Participation Focus Groups Public Survey Public Meeting Conclusions and Recommendations	

PLAN SUMMARY

PLAN PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The 2015-2019 Morgan County Parks Five Year Plan updates and replaces the 2010-2014 plan developed in 2009, though many of the previous sections remain intact with minor updates.

The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board recognizes the importance of committing to a parks and recreation master planning process. The board understands the limited funding available from the county property tax base, the importance of parks and recreation opportunities to its citizens, and the need to plan for maintenance of its existing park and the development of new parks and services. The board will continue to rely on the master planning process to establish priorities and to define realistic objectives given the county's present and future budgets.

The department is also submitting the master plan to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Outdoor Recreation to satisfy eligibility requirements for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant programs and other state and federal grant programs. The priorities emanating from this 5-year master plan are the result of a detailed facility and program inventory, public input, budget and organizational review, and an analysis of specific challenges and opportunities in Morgan County.

Throughout this plan, priorities and recommendations are defined according to the realistic benefit to the residents of and visitors to Morgan County.

Specifically, this Master Plan will:

- Evaluate the physical condition and accessibility of Burkhardt Creek County Park
- Evaluate current parks and recreation programming provided by other recreation providers
- Evaluate current policies, department organization and budget, objectives and constraints
- Set realistic, attainable goals and objectives that reflect current board and county issues, and
- Provide a guide for developing new parks and recreation facilities and programs in Morgan County according to the needs and desires of its citizens

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this plan and process are to:

- Serve as a day-to-day planning document for guiding the operation of the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board
- Provide the basis to make prioritized decisions
- Challenge the community to get involved in its parks and

- recreational programs through community organizations
- Elicit the input and support of the citizens of Morgan County
- Serve as a guide for networking with other local planning authorities and recreation providers

MORGAN COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION BOARD: MISSION, VISION, AND PURPOSE

MISSION

Develop and maintain a system of high quality parks and recreation areas in Morgan County by providing constructed facilities, open spaces, natural environments, programs, and services in a thoughtful and cost effective manner.

VISION

The quality of life in Morgan County will be improved by a system of parks and recreation areas easily accessed by all county residents that will enhance their physical, social, and emotional well being, while preserving unique environmental and historic areas of the County.

PURPOSE

- Maintain an up-to-date five year master plan for the Morgan County Parks and Recreation System
- Develop support for funding the management and maintenance of the Morgan County Parks and Recreation System
- Acquire and develop county parks to meet local parks and recreation needs
- Improve outdoor education opportunities
- Preserve unique environmental and historic areas in Morgan County
- Utilize development of parks and recreation opportunities as a catalyst for enhancing economic development and the overall quality of life in Morgan County



CONTEXT OF THE PLAN

PLANNING AREA

Morgan County is located in Central Indiana and is bordered to the south by Monroe and Brown Counties, to the west by Putnam and Owen Counties, to the north by Hendricks and Marion Counties, and to the east by Johnson County.

The planning area and the parks and recreation service delivery area for the Morgan County 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan include the entire county. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Outdoor Recreation (IDNR), State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) places Morgan County at the central western edge of region 16.



Figure 1. Indiana Association of Regional Councils map

NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPE

Morgan County has a land area of 406.5 square miles and has an average population density of 169.5 people per square mile. Morgan County contains state recreation lands that are part of the Morgan-Monroe State Forest (6598 acres) and Bradford Woods, owned by Indiana University (2500 acres).

Morgan County is bisected by the White River Valley. The county is also home to large areas of land that were not glaciated during the last ice age. The river valley and contributing watersheds, along with the non-glaciated hills, result in a topography that includes a combination of fertile, flat farm land in the river valley and in the northern glaciated townships with relatively high, steep hills in the southern non-glaciated areas.

This topography affected the development of agriculture and industry in Morgan County, which varied considerably between the level, fertile land in the northern townships that were suitable for agriculture, and the rugged, heavily wooded areas in the south which were not. Today the land use and development patterns are still heavily influenced by the natural topography, hydrology and land cover patterns.

One of the greatest threats to the natural landscape in Morgan County today is the impact from exotic invasive species on native plant communities. Heavy infestations of bush honeysuckle and other invasive plant species have seriously compromised all habitat types in the county. Additionally the impacts of the Emerald Ash Borer, and other exotic pests, continues to threaten the integrity of woodlands and change the character of forested areas throughout the county. Maintenance and mitigation routines to control invasive species must be implemented on all county park lands to ensure these special public places provide the best possible setting for exploration and appreciation of the county's natural heritage.

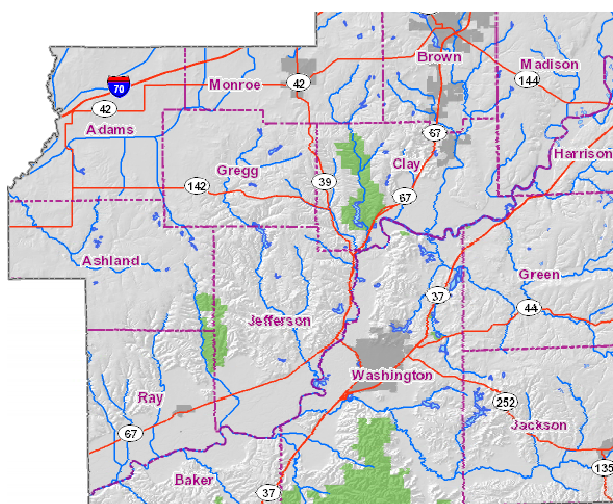


Figure 2. Morgan County Townships, Topography, and State Recreation Lands

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES

When the 1818 Treaty of St. Mary's ceded all land south of Fort Wayne to the United States Government, settlement of this vast area began in earnest. It was in that same year that Jacob Whetzel and his son Cyrus blazed a 60-mile trail following an Indian trace from Laurel in Franklin County to an area known as "The Bluffs" near the White River in Morgan County. Known as Whetzel's Trace, it served as the primary route for settlers coming to central Indiana from the east and was heavily used until the construction of the National Road through Indiana during the late 1820s.

Morgan County was founded in 1821 and was named for General Daniel Morgan, a Revolutionary War hero. With the organization of the county, settlement increased and a number of early communities were established. The county seat of Martinsville was founded in 1822 along the east bank of the White River. The town's ready access to the river encouraged its early growth. During the mid-nineteenth century, the community was one of central Indiana's leading shipping points for pork and grain.

Two early settlements in northern Morgan County included Brooklyn and Mooresville. Settlers arrived in Brooklyn as early as 1819. Located along the White Lick Creek, the village was known for its distilleries. Mooresville, also first settled about 1819 was closely associated with the Society of Friends, who established a meeting in the area in 1823. As the town developed into northern Morgan County's largest community, the Friends opened one of the county's first subscription schools during the 1820s. The Academy Building, an 1861 brick school, remains as a testimony to this influential early religious group.

Founded in 1837, Waverly sprung up as a product of the construction of the Central Canal linking Indianapolis with Newberry in Greene County. Construction on the canal began that same year with large numbers of Irish workers coming to the area. Only a year later, with a small segment of the canal completed, construction was suspended due to financial problems.

The demise of the Central Canal signaled the beginnings of the railroad era in Morgan County. In 1847, the Martinsville & Franklin Flatbar Railroad, operated by the Madison & Indianapolis line, began service to the county. During the remainder of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, the railroad would have a lasting impact on the county's commercial, industrial, and agricultural development.

Although only a limited number of lines crossed the county, the railroad's economic impact was felt county wide. Paragon, located in southwestern Morgan County, was platted along one of the lines and

is one of the county's few towns established solely as a result of the railroad. More typical was the dramatic growth of already established communities such as Morgantown, Brooklyn, and Mooresville. Even towns such as Monrovia, Hall, and Eminence, that had no direct access to lines, benefited from the railroad. With access to distant markets, area farmers boosted their productivity and prosperity. Evidence of this is seen in the many substantial late-nineteenth century houses built throughout the county's rural areas.

Nowhere was the railroad's impact more apparent than in the county seat of Martinsville. Beginning in the 1850s, when the town was linked by rail line to Chicago and Indianapolis, and well into the early twentieth century, a number of significant industries bolstered the local economy. The Adams Brick Company and the Poston Brick Company took advantage of the large deposits of shale in the cliffs north of town. The Old Hickory Chair Company, later the Old Hickory Furniture Company, operated a large plant in town, manufacturing bent wood chairs and other pieces. Martinsville also became known for Grassyfork Fisheries. Established in 1899 and now owned by Ozark Fisheries, Grassyfork was, by World War II, the world's largest supplier of goldfish.

Manufacturing was not Martinsville's only major economic activity. Between about 1885-1950, the town was nationally renowned for its eleven mineral water sanitariums. People would travel by rail to bathe in and drink the healthful waters. Only two of these sanitariums remain. On North Main Street, the Morgan House, now subsidized housing, is the former New Highland Sanitarium. The Martinsville Sanitarium on West Harrison Street is currently vacant.

As Martinsville's industrial activity waned during the mid-twentieth century, the town, like many of the county's other communities, relied on the area's agricultural economy. In more recent years, the Morgan County population increased faster than the Indiana average from 1990 to 2000 with 19% growth during that time period. This growth was accompanied by more land being developed for housing as well as complementary commercial and institutional uses.

The majority of this growth was clustered around areas such as Mooresville and Martinsville, and in spots along SR 37, resulting in a notable decline in agricultural land use in those areas. Between 2000 and 2015 the population growth moved closer to its historical levels, which have averaged about 1.25% per year for the past thirty years.

This clustered growth pattern along the SR 37 is one of the factors that led to the SR 37 corridor being identified as the preferred route for the new construction of I-69. This large scale infrastructure improvement project will provide a new connection between

Indianapolis and Evansville. As was the case with the original development pattern along SR 37, the I-69 corridor is expected to spur some additional population growth and business development. However, unlike SR37, I-69 is being designed as a limited access freeway, therefore any business development or population growth will primarily be concentrated in the vicinity of new interchanges or in Martinsville. This change in development and population location is anticipated to have a much greater impact on the Town of Martinsville's Park System than it is on the County Park System.

Unfortunately the development of the I-69 corridor does not include the development of any parallel bicycle or pedestrian corridors, or the provision of openings or underpasses to allow connectivity to be developed across the corridor after the interstate freeway is constructed. This will create a significant north-south barrier to bicycle connectivity and will limit the ability of Morgan County Parks to fully implement their connectivity plan, as outlined in the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board's Greenway Plan. The proposed routes, points of connections, etc. will need to be reevaluated once the full scope of impacts associated with the physical infrastructure construction can be seen, and there is some initial indication of the type and scope of new development that is spurred.

While it is certainly appropriate to consider the provision of parks and recreation areas in portions of the county where population growth has occurred, it is also important to look at historical landmarks that might serve as centerpieces for a future park or recreation program or activity. The Parks and Recreation Board is currently focused on the development of a park at the historic site of the Town of Waverly. The emphasis at this park will be on local history, and planning is now underway to identify the scope of features, programs, and facilities that will be developed at the park to highlight the importance of this historic community on the banks of the White River. The Morgan County Historic Preservation Society maintains a Most Endangered Historical Sites list, which offers other potential sites that could be suitable for future park development as the County Park system continues to expand in the coming years.



DEFINING THE CONSTITUENCY AND ITS NEEDS

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

(Sources: www.hoosierdata.in.gov and <http://stats.indiana.edu>)

A region's economy thrives or dies because of the people who choose to live there. That choice may occur by being born there and desiring to stay, or a more deliberate one of choosing to relocate from somewhere else. Monitoring change in the size and movement of population is an important barometer of well-being. More and more the quality of life factor is becoming an important measure of whether people choose to stay in their hometown or move to a new town.

Statistics show that people are actually moving to places because of the quality of life factors that exist; and that employers are following the people. Parks and recreation facilities, amenities, and services are among the most important reasons people choose to relocate and also one of the most important factors employers consider when deciding where to locate their business. Therefore, when planning for parks and recreation services and facilities in Morgan County, it is just as important to be pro-active and create the parks and recreation infrastructure that attracts more people to the county as it is to be reactive to the population growth that has occurred over the past several years and that is expected to occur during the planning time frame.

The population centers in Morgan County include the cities of Martinsville and Mooresville. There are also small population clusters in the towns of Bethany, Brooklyn, Monrovia, Morgantown, and Paragon. The map in Figure 3 depicts the overall population distribution in the county. The darker areas represent higher concentrations of neighborhoods and higher population densities, clearly demonstrating the higher population densities in the cities and

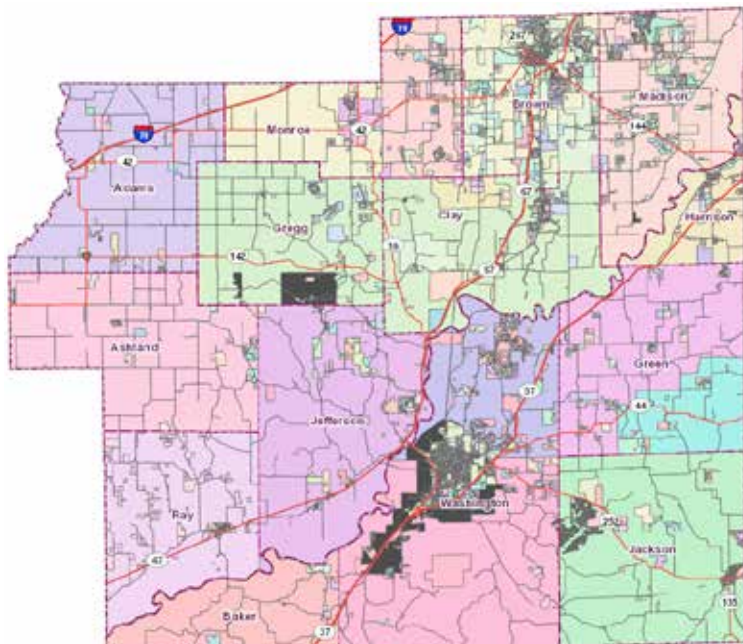


Figure 3. Morgan County Neighborhoods

towns of Morgan County.

The population distribution by age is presented in Figure 4 below. This distribution matches the overall State of Indiana population distribution somewhat closely. The important thing to note is that the US Census Bureau predicts over the next five years and longer, there will be increasing numbers of citizens over the age of 65, while the population of adults aged 25-54 will decrease or remain steady over that same time period. This phenomenon can be seen in the Morgan County population distribution by age in that the 45-64 year old age

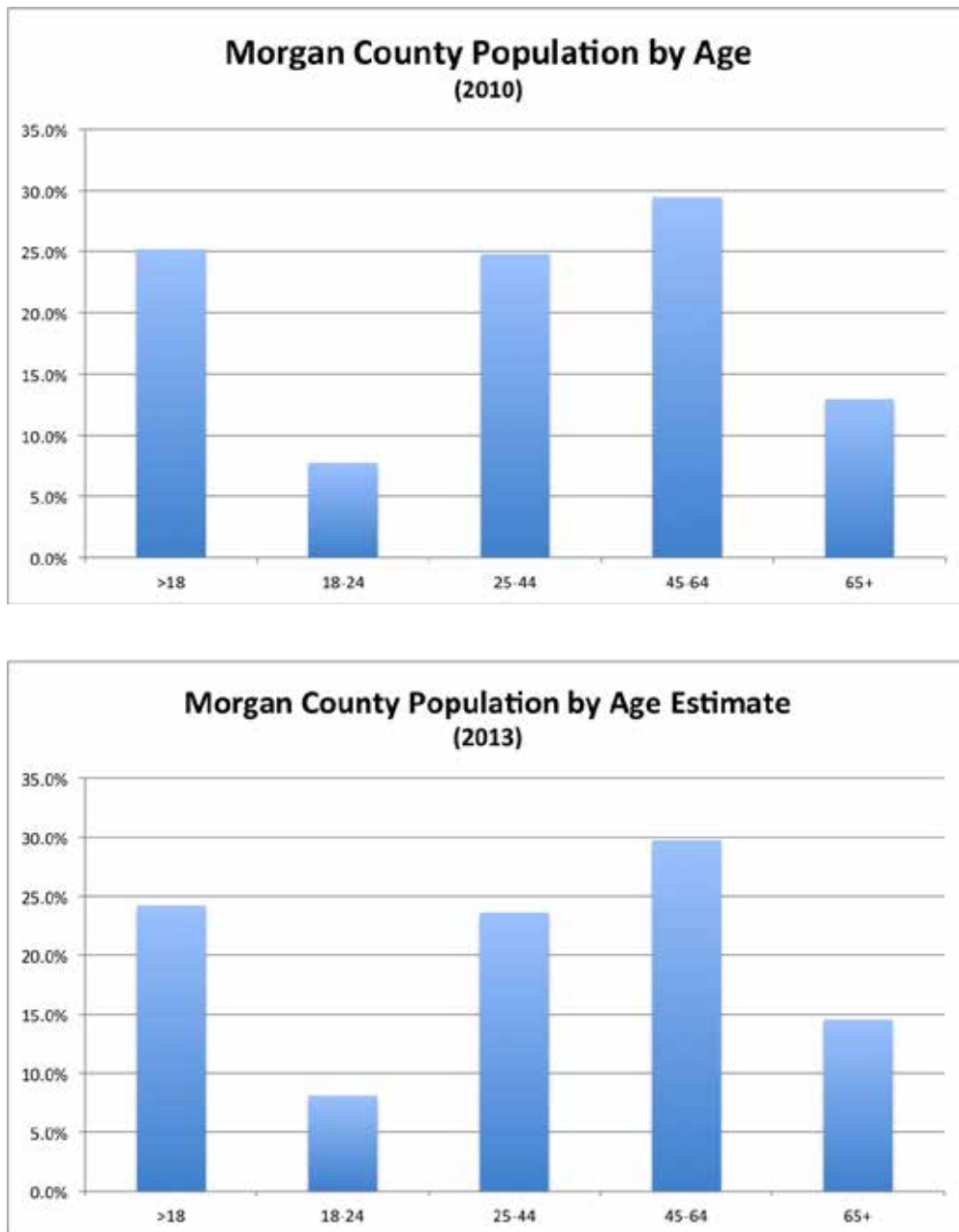


Figure 4. Morgan County Population by Age Comparison

group is the highest percentage of the current population. Overall, the population of Morgan County has increased steadily since 1950 as is presented in Figure 5. In recent times, this increase has been most dramatic between 1990 and 2000 with a 19.3% increase (nearly 2% per annum). However, since that time, the population growth has moved closer to its historical levels, which have averaged about 1.25% per year for the past thirty years. From 2000 to 2008, the population increase in Morgan County was just

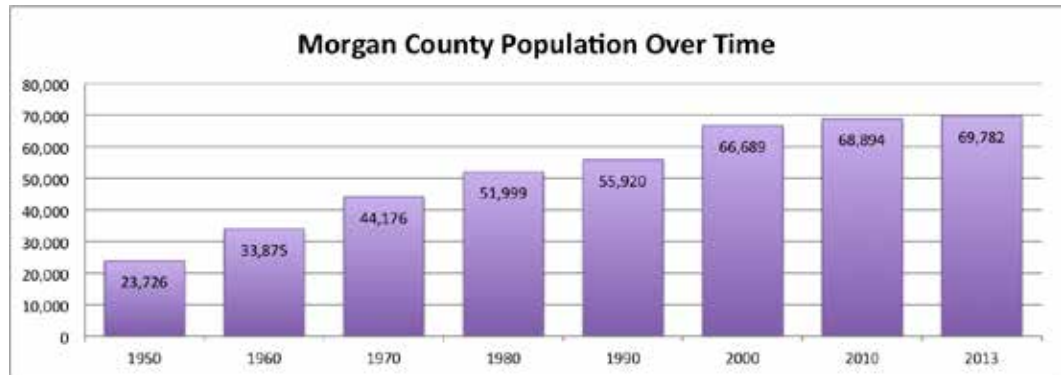


Figure 5. Morgan County Population Over Time

under 6%, which equates to about 0.75% annual growth rate. Looking to the future, US Census Bureau projections for population growth in Morgan County (See Figure 6) are consistent with the historical averages, showing slow steady growth over the next fifteen years. This is an important trend with regard to the projection of future park and recreation facilities and program needs. The pockets of growth appear to be concentrated in and around existing local communities such as Martinsville and Mooresville, both of which have their own local park systems. Therefore it will be important for Morgan County Parks to collaborate with these other park

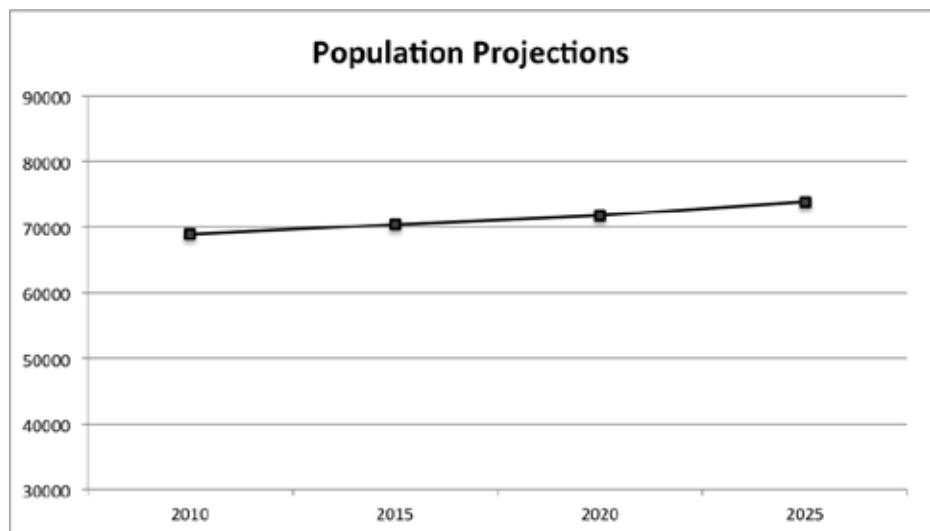


Figure 6. Morgan County Population Projections

systems over the next 5 years to determine the type and location of facilities and recreation programs that are needed. Analyzing and understanding the impacts of the projected shifts in population and localized growth will be key in determining which facilities, features,

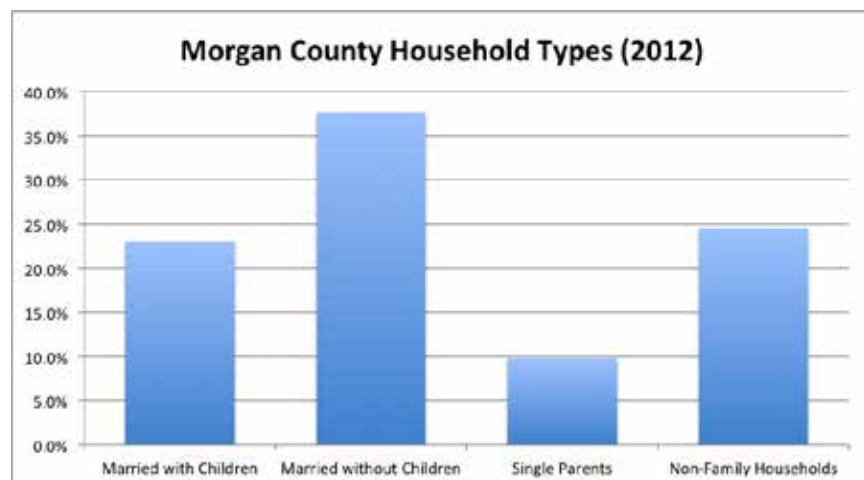


Figure 7. Morgan County Household Types

and programs are most well suited for inclusion as part of the County Park System, and those that should be developed as part of the various local park systems.

The population of Morgan County is predominantly Caucasian (98%), with the African American, Native American, Asian, Latino, and Pacific Islander populations accounting for slightly more than 2% of the total.

Morgan County households are mostly (about 75%) family households with about half of those with children and the other half married couples without children. About 10% of all households in the county are single parent families.

The median household income in Morgan County from 2008 to 2012 is estimated at \$56,303. On average, Morgan County residents have a higher median household income than the State of Indiana median income by about 14%.

EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

Morgan County is in the State of Indiana Region 5 Economic Growth Area, which includes Indianapolis, Madison County, and seven other counties surrounding Indianapolis. Within Morgan County, manufacturing jobs have increased by 27.4% in the region between 2009 and 2013, and represents the largest source of new employment as shown in the graph below. When considering percentages alone, the sector with the highest percentage growth in employment since 2009 is agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting at 61.4%. However, this industry is on the lower end of new individual employment when compared with other industries that showed growth as well. When comparing numbers of new individual employment alone, manufacturing is the top source, followed by health care and social assistance as depicted in the graph below. (Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages).

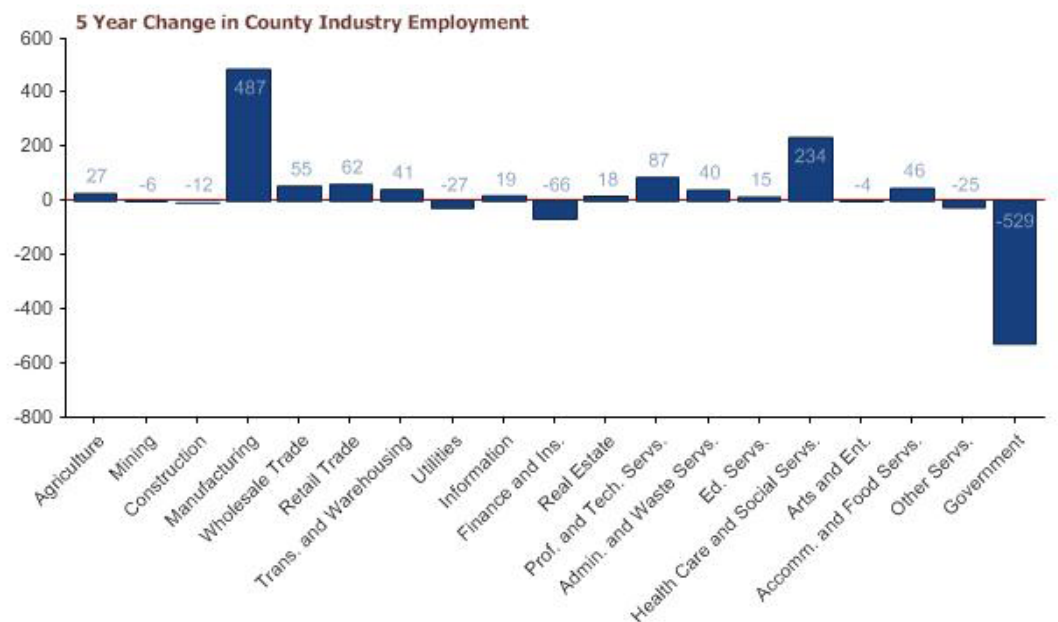


Figure 8. 2009 to 2013 Change in Morgan County Industry Employment

Approximately 35% of the county's labor force commutes to Marion County for work. In general, the education level of the labor force is similar to the State of Indiana education rates. Morgan County has a similar percentage of people whose education is at the high school level and a smaller percentage of people whose education is at the college level or above (Figure 9) as compared to the State of Indiana.

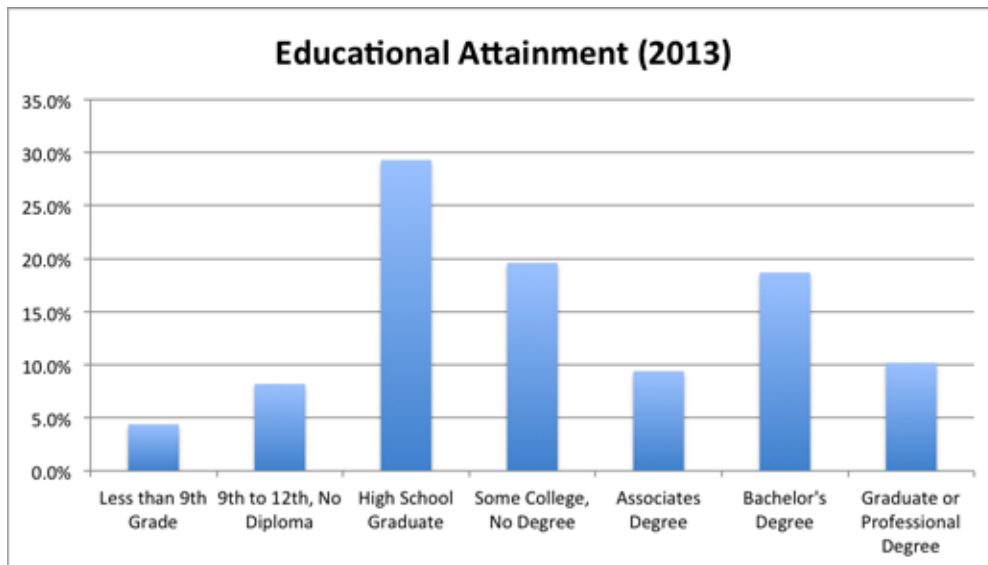


Figure 9. Morgan County Educational Attainment in 2013

TRANSPORTATION

The primary transportation corridors in Morgan County include Interstate 70, which extends in an eastwest direction across the northwest corner of the county and is the only interstate highway in Morgan County. State Roads 37 and 67 run generally from the northeast corner of the county to the southwest corner and are the major north-south vehicular routes; each provides direct connections to the Interstate 465 loop around Indianapolis. State Road 37 also provides a direct connection to Bloomington.

Construction of I-69 between Indianapolis and Evansville across Morgan County is currently underway and are scheduled to be complete by the end of 2016. The I-69 route follows the current SR 37 corridor through Morgan County. Environmental impact statements were developed and evaluated to determine locations for interchanges and current plans show the Liberty Church Road intersection will become an interchange. Unlike SR 37, I-69 will be a limited access freeway. Construction of I-69 will not include the development of any significant bicycle or pedestrian cross connections or parallel multi-modal trail systems creating an even bigger barrier to cross-county connectivity. This is a significant issue that will require a reassessment of options and alternatives for connectivity once construction of I-69 is complete.

Other state highways that traverse Morgan County include State Roads 39, 42, 44, 135, 142, 144, 252 and 267. There are two county plans that may create parks and recreation opportunities as they are implemented over the next five years. The Morgan County SR 37/144 Corridor Plan, which outlines the impacts of I-69 on Morgan County, and the Morgan County Comprehensive Plan.

The Morgan County comprehensive plan presents information about the necessity to improve east-west transportation corridors in the county; specifically the widening and improvement of SR144 and the possible use of the Henderson Ford/Centennial Road/Pennington Road Corridor as another major east-west corridor. These projects hold opportunities to develop multi-modal trails and support facilities in addition to standard roadway improvements. Capitalizing on opportunities such as these will be very important in the overall effort to improve the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the county.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The natural and historical features of Morgan County offer tremendous opportunities for the ongoing development and expansion of outdoor recreation facilities by the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board. The natural and cultural heritage of the county is rich and diverse. However, there are threats to existing natural communities and locally historic sites that must be taken seriously. These include the invasion of native plant communities by non-native invasive plant species, along with serious degradation caused by pests such as the Emerald Ash Borer. Similarly, historic sites continue to come under pressure from new development and/or lack of maintenance. Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board must remain vigilant in their efforts to protect these important resources across the county, especially those under the direct control of the board.

These opportunities should be carefully evaluated in the context of the needs of recreationally underserved populations in the county, and the overall recreational needs and desires of all county citizens.

Families, including married couples with and without children, and single parent families, make up a majority of the households in Morgan County. This correlates with the age of the population with the majority of people being either under the age of 18, or between the ages of 25-64. Providing recreation opportunities that meet the needs of families should be a priority when developing new facilities and programs.

The distribution of population in the county has already resulted in proportionate development of parks and recreation facilities and programs throughout the county. The larger cities and towns have local park systems to serve their residents. Some unincorporated areas of the county are also well served by the Morgan-Monroe State Forest. Development of new parks and facilities should continue to be focused in the unincorporated areas of the County which currently lack any type of close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities.

The construction of I-69 through Morgan County presents challenges and opportunities with regard to recreation. While the new freeway

may spur some localized development and population growth, the limited access nature of the roadway is a barrier to bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. However, there are plans for improving the local transportation infrastructure in Morgan County over the next several years. The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board must become involved, and stay involved, with the planning associated with these improvements to make sure that any opportunities for the development of trails and other transportation enhancements that add to the recreation base of the county can be realized as part of infrastructure upgrades.

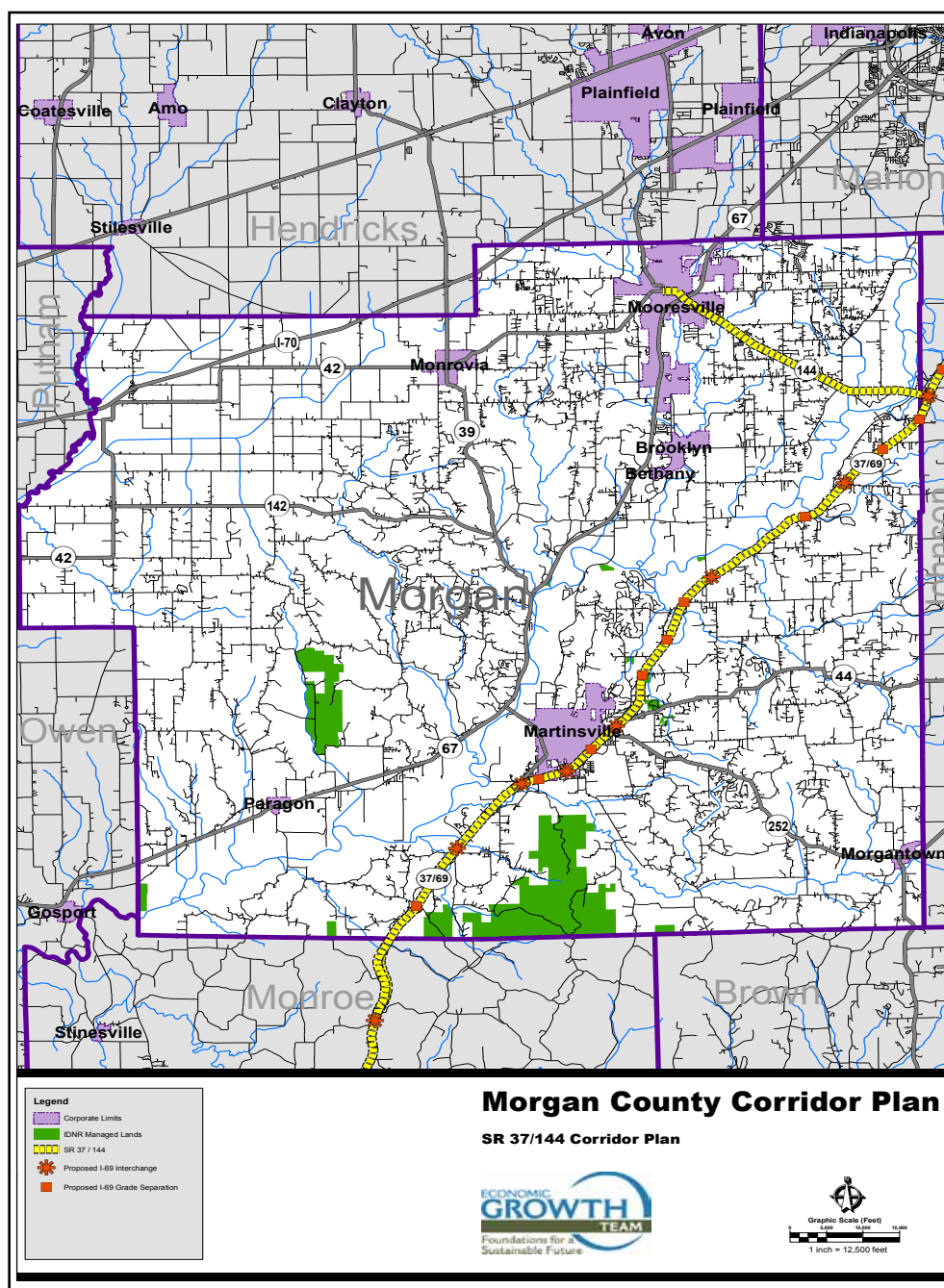


Figure 10. State Road 37/144 Corridor Plan, February 2010



PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The parks and recreation system in Morgan County consists of several agencies managing park lands and recreation programs throughout the county. The Morgan-Monroe State Forest manages the largest quantity of park lands in the county with 6,598 acres of managed forests that includes opportunities for hiking, primitive camping, picnicking, fishing, and hunting. The next largest park land manager in Morgan County is Indiana University. The university owns and manages a 2,500 acre resident camp facility, Bradford Woods, and a small fifteen acre parcel containing the Goethe Link Observatory.

The buildings at Bradford Woods are open and available for rental by the general public for a fee; and the grounds, including several hiking trails and picnic areas are open for use year-round. This property is heavily programmed during the spring, summer, and fall with many elementary school programs, Riley Hospital camp programs, and other camp programs for children with disabilities. All its facilities and programs meet or exceed the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

The Goethe Link Observatory is managed by Indiana University Real Estate. The grounds are used by the Indiana Daffodil Society, especially during the spring bloom season. The observatory is used by the Indiana University Department of Astronomy and the Indiana Astronomical Society. The combination of these three organizations managing and programming the facility creates numerous opportunities for the general public to participate in activities at this site. However, it is only by attending one of these programs or events that the public has access to this property.

The remainder of the parks and recreation system in Morgan County is comprised of facilities and programs managed by city and town parks and recreation agencies and some town councils. More details on these agencies are provided in subsequent sections.

FACILITIES INVENTORY

The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board (MCPRB) currently has two park facilities.

Burkhart Creek County Park is an eighty-three acre parcel of land that was donated by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) with deed restrictions that essentially require the property to be used as a natural, low impact park for county residents. Development of Burkhart Creek County Park was completed in 2012 with Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds provided by the IDNR and includes a paved parking lot and portable restrooms, two shelters with picnic tables and grills, benches distributed throughout 1.5 miles of stone and asphalt trails that traverse wetland, and prairie and upland forest

habitat. Signage exists at multiple points and provides educational material about site features. Bat and bird boxes are prominent. Access to the creek itself is limited, but views are provided.

Waverly County Park, located in old town Waverly on Old State Road 37, was acquired after flooding in 2008 destroyed most of the property north of the road. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants and funds acquired through riverboat casino taxes allowed the county to buy the land from the previous owners.

The MCPB prepared a master plan for the site in 2013, and coordination has already begun on an RTP-funded trail that begins on the property and follows the White River downstream for approximately two miles. The county continues to move forward with the 2013 master plan, which proposes constructed wetlands to alleviate future flooding, enhanced natural areas and foot paths, open space for programming, and a future parking area. The master plan also includes references to the site's history, such as a plaza at the old town square, formal plantings to mark the foundations of former homes, monuments to the site's canal and mill history, and the reuse of the remaining historic structures as a museum, workshop, and office. Discussions with the IDNR regarding the location of a boat launch on park property are ongoing. Phased construction is scheduled to begin in 2015 with a grand opening planned to coincide with the state's bicentennial celebration in 2016.

CITY AND TOWN PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The Martinsville Parks and Recreation Department owns and operates Jimmy Nash City Park, which is about ninety acres and includes a swimming pool, tennis courts, basketball courts, baseball diamond, hiking trails, picnic areas, shelter houses, play equipment, and a fishing pond.

The Martinsville Parks and Recreation Department also manages the following properties:

- Victory Park, a traffic circle that contains a Veterans memorial
- Doris Daily Park, a small plot of land that contains a Gazebo
- Walter Martin Park, which has a shelter house and play equipment

The City of Martinsville owns about 5.5 acres of property developed as baseball fields and a small 0.13 acre parcel downtown on Washington and Jefferson Streets developed as the Veterans Memorial Park.

The Artesian Little League also owns about ten acres of property developed as baseball fields. The Martinsville metropolitan School District has a high school athletic complex, two middle school sports complexes, and four elementary schools with playgrounds and play fields.

The Mooresville Parks and Recreation Department manages Pioneer Park, which is about 150 acres and includes the Soaring Eagle Zip Line, an aquatics center, seven picnic shelters, a 3.5 mile asphalt walking trail, baseball fields, soccer fields, play equipment, basketball courts, volleyball courts, and open play areas. White Lick Creek flows through the property. Mooresville Parks and Recreation also manages the following:

- Old Town Park, which is about seven acres and has playgrounds, shelter houses, and horseshoe pits
- North Park, which is about five acres
- Rooker Run Park, which is about eighteen acres
- Hadley Memorial, a small memorial for Paul Hadley, designer of the Indiana State flag.

The Town of Morgantown has a small park with play equipment nestled between two baseball fields. The park is maintained by the town and the ball fields are maintained by Morgantown Youth Sports. The town also recently put in a basketball court on a small parcel of property that may eventually become a park.

In the Town of Monrovia there is a complex of five baseball fields. The land is privately owned and the fields are maintained by the local little league organization. Monrovia also has a high school, middle school, and elementary school all located on the same campus with a full athletic complex. Monrovia is also in the process of finding a home for a new community park. Discussions are underway regarding land availability, and the MCPB is assisting with the local effort.

The Town of Brooklyn has a parks and recreation board that has been in existence for about five years and that board manages the Brooklyn Kids Park. The park is about seven acres and has play equipment, a walking trail with benches, a baseball field, an open play area, a picnic shelter, a basketball court, and an indoor pavilion.

The Town of Paragon manages a four acre park that includes horseshoe pits, a baseball field, an open play area, and a picnic shelter. The town also has a small parcel downtown next to the post office with a gazebo and benches.

There are several private golf courses in Morgan County including the Eagle Pines Golf Course in Mooresville, Links at Heartland Crossing near Mooresville, Friendswood Golf Course near Friendswood, the Martinsville Country Club, and Fox Cliff Golf Course.

There are about twenty small, private fitness clubs in the county offering fitness programs such as weight training, martial arts, yoga, and other exercise classes. The Barbara B. Jordan YMCA in Martinsville is a full service YMCA with indoor aquatics facilities, gyms, exercise rooms, indoor track, and other amenities.

ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board intends to meet or exceed the requirements for accessibility at all its facilities. Whenever physically and financially feasible, all new facilities will be constructed to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines at acceptable challenge levels.

Morgan County's ADA Coordinator is Mr. Larry Smith. The ADA coordinator can be reached at the County Administration Building in Martinsville. Mr. Smith provides ADA compliance assistance to all Morgan County agencies, including Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board, as needed.

All ADA compliance information and updates are posted in the County Administration Building. Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board has established a process for handling ADA inquiries and issues related to county parks. All issues, inquires, etc. related to ADA compliance in parks are presented to the President of the Morgan County Parks Board. The President in turn, presents all grievances, questions, etc. to the full board and to the ADA coordinator. The President then works with the county attorney, the County Commissioners and the County ADA Coordinator to address the situation as needed.

The current parking area, trails, and shelter house at the Duckworth Road side of Burkhart Creek County Park are not wheelchair accessible because of the steep terrain on the site. Shelter house access has been designed so that accessible vehicles can deliver passengers directly to the facility. Also, most signage planned for installation at this site meets universal design standards.

The Warthen Road side of the Burkhart Creek County Park meets all ADA guidelines necessary under the parameters of the grant. This includes an ADA accessible parking area and restrooms, an asphalt trail within ADA slope guidelines, and other crushed stone surface trails that are wheelchair accessible.

Waverly County Park will be developed in accordance with ADA guidelines.

RECREATION PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Recreation programming and community events are offered throughout the county by various organizations. A brief listing and summary of these organizations is presented below.

- The MCPB hosts the Great Backyard Bird Count in February, Color Me Green Dash at Burkhart Creek County Park in April, and periodic wildflower walks throughout the Spring months.

- The Mooresville Parks and Recreation District has a programming division and a full time staff. The department provides a variety of recreational programs for community members throughout the year. Programs are offered in the categories of Aquatics, Family, Before and After School, School Age, Preschool, Fitness & Wellness, Youth Enrichment, and Community Events.
- The Barbara B. Jordan YMCA in Martinsville offers recreation programs for all ages in the categories of Health and Fitness, Aquatics, Camping, Family, Childcare, Community Development, Arts, and Sports.
- The Martinsville Parks holds several annual holiday events.
- The Boys & Girls Clubs of Morgan County has facilities in Mooresville and Martinsville and offers programs to anyone between the ages of 5 and 18. Programs are offered in each of five key program areas: Arts, Character & Leadership Development, Education & Career Development, Health & Life Skills, Sports, Fitness, & Recreation. In addition to offering programs in the above five areas, the Club provides its members with a daily snack, library, games room, and computer lab.
- Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts have active programs in the County.
- Community Events in Morgan County include: Morgan County 4-H Fair (August), Old Settlers Festival in Mooresville (August), Paragon Homecoming Festival (September), Colonel John Vawter Day in Morgantown (September), the Brooklyn Fall Festival (October) and the Fall Foliage Festival in Martinsville (October).

PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST PLAN

The Morgan County Park & Recreation Board has made significant progress on the tasks outlined in its previous Five Year Master Plan, including the acquisition, and in the case of Burkhart Creek County Park, the construction of two new county parks.

As described above, Burkhart Creek County Park now includes a paved parking area, two shelters, picnic tables and grills, two miles of well-maintained trails, and many acres of varied habitat. The MCPB also received two grants that enabled it to acquire the property at the new Waverly County Park in old town Waverly. This opened opportunities to address flood prone areas, create river access, build a new trail identified in previous planning efforts, and more.

In addition to these major accomplishments, the MCPB has also struck an intergovernmental agreement for the maintenance of park property by the County Correction Department. The board has also designated a member to attend and monitor meetings of the Morgan

County Commissioners, Morgan County Transportation Board, and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As reported in the previous county park plan as well as the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), there are ample recreation opportunities in Morgan County. The county's previous plan also made these observations:

However, most of these opportunities are concentrated in parts of the county where the population density is the highest. Analysis of the current inventory in the county leads to the conclusion that recreation opportunities are most needed in the northwestern part of the county and the central-eastern part of the county in Green and Southern Harrison Townships, where population is less concentrated and transportation to population centers is relatively more difficult.

With the inception of Waverly County Park, some progress has been made toward the development of recreation opportunities in the central-eastern part of the county. Though the park is not yet operational, it is quickly becoming a reality with a planned 2016 grand opening.

Conversely, the same lack of services that existed in the northwest portion of the county five years ago remains today. Development opportunities in that area may be limited due to the dominance of agricultural activity and relative lack of population that might utilize any potential facilities. This is not to say that the area cannot support a park facility. In the near term, however, aiding local park development in Monrovia is a reasonable first step toward offering facilities in the northwest part of the county while larger efforts are committed to the progress already made in the central-eastern portion of the county.

Finally, the previous plan noted a lack of programming in the early part of the year, and the MCPB responded with three Spring activities: the Great Backyard Bird Count, Color Me Green Dash, and periodic wildflower walks. Public outreach efforts nevertheless revealed moderate interest in increased programming efforts. The master plan for Waverly County Park includes several avenues for educational and/or vocational programming to help increase these types of services and meet local demand. In addition, the MCPB's association with a local astronomy enthusiast club could offer more opportunities to involve the community in the park system, and the board should continue to examine the potential in this relationship.



LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PLANS

A review of local and regional planning documents was conducted to ensure that the parks and recreation master plan considers what other agencies are planning. Considering these documents increases the likelihood of cooperation and partnership between agencies, may increase opportunities for funding, and fosters a political climate of open communication and collaboration. Three planning documents were reviewed in detail because they contain information and plans that are closely related to the mission of the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board. These documents are:

- Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization Regional Pedestrian Plan
- Morgan County Greenways Plan
- Morgan County Transportation Plan

Relevant information from these plans and possible implications for the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board are presented in this section. When the time comes to implement any recommended actions in this plan, the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board should work in close collaboration with any nearby towns, townships, cities, school boards, or any other local government agency to find economies of scale and leverage funding opportunities where possible.

INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MORGAN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN

This plan, adopted in 2007, is intended to be used as a guide for public infrastructure and private development decisions in Morgan County. The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization does not cover all of Morgan County, and accordingly this plan focuses primarily on the northwest corner of the county. It is this area that is projected to see the most growth over the next 20 years due to its proximity to the Indianapolis markets.

The general recommendations of the plan are stated as follows:

[...]bicycle and pedestrian facilities may be provided either within road rights-of-way or by facilities constructed in separate rights-of-way. When these modes are accommodated within road rights-of-way, it may be done with a separate multi-use path or with pedestrian sidewalk and on-street bicycle provisions. It is recommended that separate off-street bicycle facilities be provided in arterial corridors. Bicycle accommodation within collector corridors, however, could be either on-street or off-street. Depending on the situation, on-street accommodation could mean dedicated bicycle lanes or wide vehicle travel lanes.

The plan also recommends non-vehicular facilities to be developed alongside the development of I-69 through the county. The map

below displays the overall vision of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities recommended by this planning document (Fig. 11).

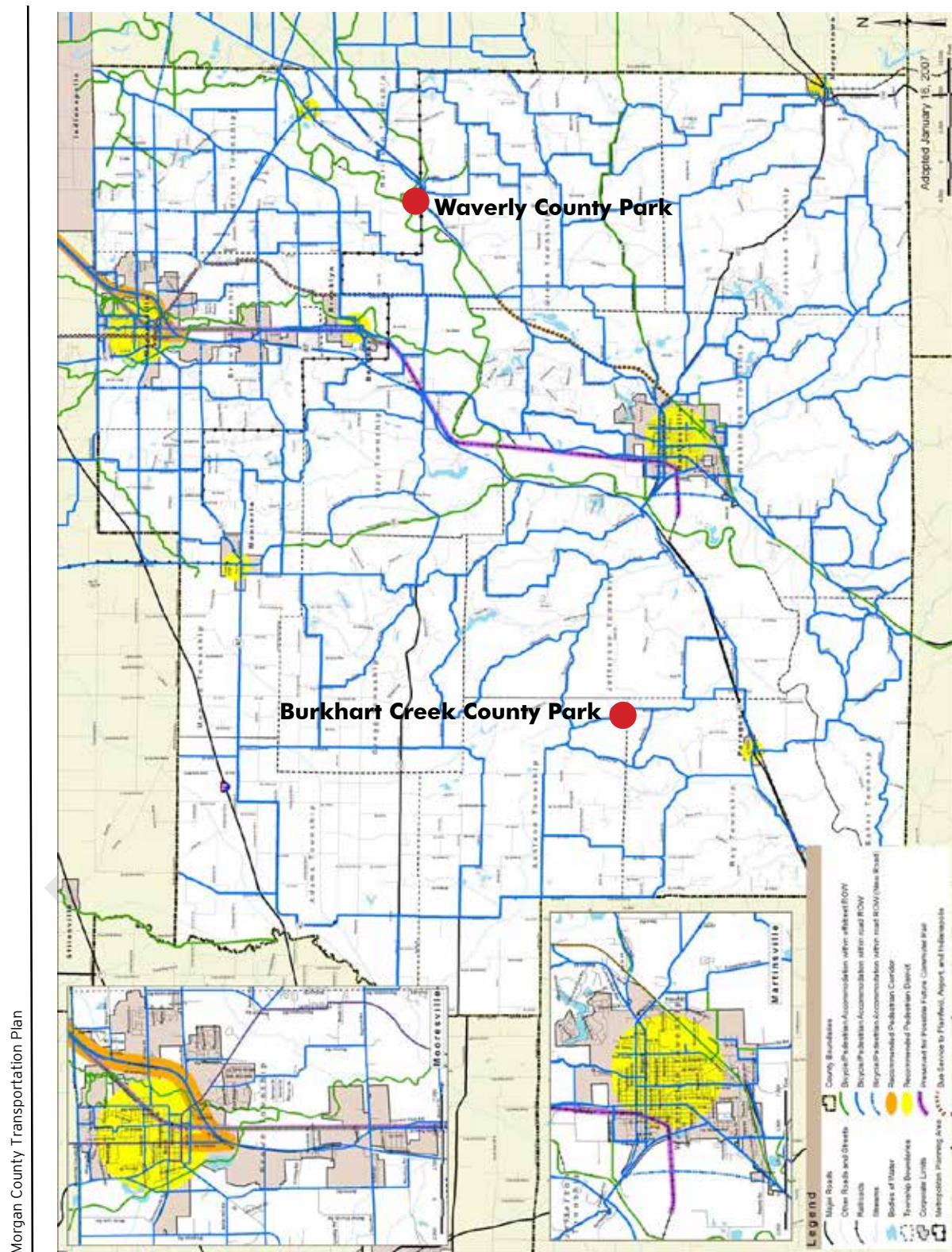


Figure 11. Regional Pedestrian Plan, Morgan County Vision

MORGAN COUNTY GREENWAYS PLAN

This plan was originally commissioned by the Morgan County Commissioners in 2004 and completed in early 2005. The plan was then updated by the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board in 2007, which is the version reviewed here. This planning document recommends numerous trail route corridors throughout the county:

- Mooresville, Landersdale Road: 10' wide trail running east on north side of Landersdale Road to fire station, approximately 3 miles. This trail would connect to North Madison Elementary School, future library, and YMCA. (The Morgan County Commissioners received a \$100,000 grant in 2009 for the first phase of this project.)
- Mooresville, Pioneer Park to Landersdale Road: Add 10' trail connection along East Fork White Lick Creek to Bridge Street and then east to Landersdale Road. A trail is also planned for the future along the East Fork of White Lick Creek from Pioneer Park north to the south side of the Indianapolis International Airport.
- Greencastle Road Bridge: Replace and widen bridge over White Lick Creek which should incorporate 8' wide trail to allow for future connection to Monrovia, which is approximately 8 miles.
- Phase I State Road 39: Add bike lane as part of improved SR 39 bypass around Martinsville.
- Phase II State Road 39: The bridge over White River is scheduled to be replaced and should incorporate a bike lane to facilitate a trail. (This piece is even more crucial due to the county park located to the west of this area.)
- Blue Bluff Road will be widened by the IPL Generating Station, which will eliminate the sharp curve. Design considerations should incorporate adding a curb and 12' wide bike lane. The County is pursuing additional right of way to accommodate the trail as part of that road widening project.
- Blue Bluff Road Bridge/White River: The existing bridge over the White River is scheduled for deck replacement in the near future. To facilitate pedestrian traffic along Blue Bluff Road, an 8' wide trail should be incorporated into the design of the new bridge deck and approaches. Blue Bluff Road is an important north-south route to allow for a connection between Martinsville and Brooklyn.
- Landersdale Road East To White River: Continuation of trail two miles on Landersdale Road to Mann Road allows for a connection which ultimately would provide access to White River, Waverly, and the Indy Greenways system.
- White River Greenway: This would be a water "trail" (canoeing, rafting, or otherwise boating) on the White River for its complete course through Morgan County. This would also include traditional park areas in selected locations along the river and additional boat access sites.
- Indian Creek Greenway: This would be a park within the floodway of Indian Creek and would feature bike and pedestrian paths

in the vicinity of Indian Creek from its mouth at White River upstream to the bridge on Low Gap Road. Ultimately it could include some nice lakes within a future sand and gravel mining operation. It could be greatly helped if the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) would purchase additional lands within the Indian Creek floodway as partial mitigation for the loss of other farmland, wetland, forest land, and floodways impacted by I-69 and related construction.

- Martinsville to Morgantown Bike-Pedestrian Path: This would be a bike-pedestrian path from Martinsville to Morgantown within the scenic Indian Creek valley. It could be on the former railroad right of way and property or accommodated by widening the paved portions of existing county roads, such as Mahalasville Road and Old Railroad Road.
- Martinsville Bike-Pedestrian Bypass for I-69: This would be a bike-pedestrian path to replace that proposed by the Governor to be within the I-69 right of way. By utilizing and upgrading rights of way of some existing county roads and city streets, as well as adding some new sections of right of way (such as within or adjacent to the Grand Valley Shopping Center), a much more used and user friendly bike-ped path will be achieved. Also, by constructing such a bike-ped bypass more of the existing businesses near SR 37 (I-69) will be able to thrive without fear of losing more of their property just to accommodate a bike-ped path within the I-69 right of way. The Bike-Pedestrian Bypass would be located to the east of existing SR 37 (I-69). It would ideally start at least as far south as the proposed interchange at Godsey Road or Liberty Church Road and extend at least as far north as the proposed interchange at Henderson Ford Road.
- Martinsville, White River, SR 39 Loop: This would be a bike-pedestrian path from downtown Martinsville, going west past Merritt Field on Douglas Street to the White River levee, south under the SR 39 bridge over White River, southeast along upgraded/rerouted SR 39 to Indian Creek, under the SR 37 (I-69) Indian Creek bridge, generally east along Jordan Road and Burton Lane, and then north along Burton lane and other streets to downtown Martinsville.
- Martinsville to Paragon to New County Park Bike-Pedestrian Path: This would be a path to logically link several thousand people to the Burkhart Creek County Park. It could utilize existing railroad right of way as well as old SR 67 right of way and county roads (such as Duckworth Road) to a great extent, thus minimizing the need for using right of way along busy SR 67.

MORGAN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The county comprehensive plan was adopted by the Morgan County Commissioners and Council in early 2010. The plan incorporated several methods of engaging the public and stakeholders during its process and incorporates those results with factual information into its recommendations.

Parks and recreation is a regular theme throughout the plan. This is demonstrated through the following partial list of goals and objectives taken directly from the document:

- Goal 1: Maintain the community's rural way of life.
 - Require the incorporation of open space in new large-scale development and appropriate redevelopment sites.
 - Protect the county's natural hillsides by enacting steep slope ordinances.
- Goal 4: Promote the development of attractive, affordable, and livable neighborhoods.
 - Promote "Quality of Life" amenities through adoption of such tools as the Greenways Plan and creation of a Trails Master Plan.
- Goal 5: Provide improved access to housing, employment, and commerce in Morgan County.
 - Promote alternative forms of transportation such as pedestrian paths, bike lanes, express bus service, carpooling, and the Interurban.
- Goal 6: Provide safe and efficient transportation networks for Morgan County.
 - Provide an interconnected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
 - Minimize the negative impacts of transportation networks to property and the natural environment through tools such as new trees or tree replacement and drainage management.
- Goal 7: Provide for county-wide park and recreation opportunities, including both facilities and services/programs.
 - Adopt the Morgan County Greenways Plan for a trail along the White River.
 - Use and keep updated the County Master Parks Plan.
 - Develop a network of interconnected parks.
 - Encourage privately provided parks and recreation areas.

The Morgan County Comprehensive Plan also includes an entire section entitled "White River Greenways Plan". The following paragraphs have been restated directly from the document.

The vision for this project is to create a true multi-use greenway corridor that will parallel the White River. The primary feature of the corridor will be a new multi-use path along the White River. The potential also exists to construct parallel equestrian trails along the route, either initially or as a future phase of the project.

In addition to walking/biking, this segment of the river is also suitable for canoeing and kayaking. Existing and new public access points would provide a number of locations to launch a canoe. It is also envisioned that a public or private livery would be developed to support water activities. Along the route, it is envisioned that a series of public parks and private recreational facilities be developed to further enhance the corridor. Public parks would serve as primary anchors for the corridor – providing starting/stopping points for the routes with numerous activities at the sites. Private campgrounds and other facilities are also envisioned along the route, providing opportunities for visitors and locals alike.

Two significant county parks are envisioned along the White River Greenway route. The first would be at Waverly and the second near the Harris/Starlight properties. Recurring flooding in the Waverly area has made it difficult to inhabit portions of the town. The county has received funding to help relocate residents whose property is repeatedly damaged by flooding. As a result, the county has purchased nearly all of the property in the old town north of Old State Road 37 and is in the process of developing a new county park.

Located along the river, the Waverly site has tremendous history associated with it. Intact portions of this history are a historic church, a former bank, and an old blacksmith shop. Based on this, it is envisioned that this be developed primarily as a history park that can trace the roots of the county. Supporting this vision is the County's goal of re-building the three span Waverly Covered Bridge that burned in the early 1900's. This bridge could become one of the pedestrian bridges needed to support the plan. The park is also envisioned as a public river access point, as well as a possible location for a canoe livery and/or a primitive campground.

Figure 13 shows the current Waverly County Park master plan.



Figure 12. Waverly Park Plan

The second county park envisioned along the greenway route is the Harrison/Starlight Park. This property, which the county would need to acquire through fee simple acquisition, conservation easement, or land swap, is also in the floodplain, so development options are somewhat limited – but it is envisioned as a series of passive recreation facilities. The river is closest to the SR 37 corridor in this area, making it the most visible portion of the greenway system. The intent is to build on this opportunity to make the park reflect the image of the trail system. The key attractions at this park are envisioned to be a public horse stable and equestrian trails. These trails would circle the park, and could parallel a portion of the trail up to the nature park just north of the site. This would provide an extended loop for horseback riding. Trails are also expected to connect to the Stone Bridge development through this site. Other features at the site could include walking trails, a bark park, and possibly the location of the county’s animal shelter. A portion of the site is also to be reserved for a future wastewater treatment facility to serve long range development along the SR 37 corridor.

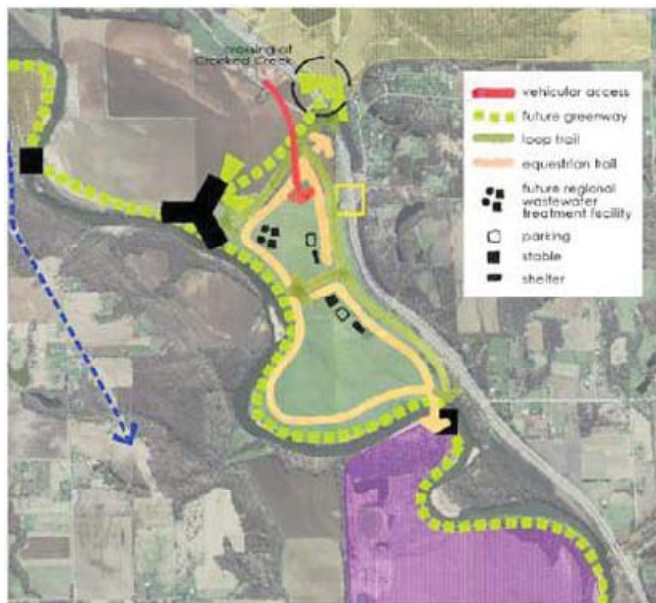


Figure 13. Proposed Harrison/Starlight County Park Concept Plan from the Morgan County Comprehensive Plan

The White River Greenway Plan section of the Morgan County Comprehensive Plan also laid out the following future vision for the greenway corridor:

The two most significant opportunities for future expansion of the trail system are extending the White River Greenway south through Martinsville and creation of a northern connection to Mooresville. The Mooresville connection is the proposed White Lick Creek Greenway trail segment, which would serve as a north-south connector that would connect central Morgan County to Mooresville and ultimately to the Indianapolis International Airport. It should be noted that a Transportation Enhancement Grant Application was submitted on behalf of the Indianapolis Airport Authority for a northern portion of this route in 2005. This route also has the benefit of creating a thirty-two mile loop by interconnecting Landersdale Road and Trail with the White River Greenway and the White Lick Creek Greenway.

The Martinsville connection is a south extension of the White River Greenway. This segment of the proposed greenway, while less clear in its alignment along the White River, county roads, etc., has many interesting and attractive potential alignments to consider. The primary feature of this section is the connection of Martinsville to the White River Greenway. Several route alignments and combinations of alignments are discussed here and merit additional exploration.

The White River Route would follow the intent of the greenway by following the scenic portions of the river, there are no plans for an extension of the route through Owen County. While it is a long term goal to connect to Owen County, it is not recommended to pursue this route at this time.

The Martinsville Urban Route provides an alternative that would complement the rural and scenic portions of the trail by constructing an urban segment through Martinsville. The trail could follow SR 67 and SR 39 into Martinsville, or it could follow the river to Blue Bluff Road and then follow that to Main Street. This would lead through the heart of downtown Martinsville and would provide direct access to the greenway for thousands of residents.

South of Martinsville, the trail has the opportunity to connect to multiple trails in the Morgan-Monroe State Forest and in Morgan County. Several route alternatives are possible including following SR 37/I-69, routing more directly south into the State Forest, or an eastern route around the State Forest. These routes should be considered as future development progresses.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Three different agencies are planning for recreational trails in Morgan County. There appears to be little or no coordination or communication between these agencies in their planning efforts. The parks and recreation board must take a leadership role in this planning effort because when a trail project is finished there is a high likelihood that its maintenance and operations will become the responsibility of the parks and recreation board.

To establish a leadership role, the parks and recreation board must at minimum monitor the minutes of the meetings of the other agencies (i.e. Indianapolis MPO and Morgan County Planning Department), as well as the Morgan County Highway Department. Ideally, the parks and recreation board would have a representative attend the monthly meetings of each of these agencies' boards.

Improving quality of life for Morgan County citizens is a common theme throughout the Morgan County Comprehensive Plan, and parks and recreation facilities are well recognized as contributing positively to quality of life. The parks and recreation board should work closely with the planning department to ensure the cooperative communication is taking place as the planning department implements the comprehensive plan.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A critical component of any parks and recreation master plan is public involvement in the process; this involvement is necessary if the parks and recreation department wants the resulting plan to compel the public to act and support implementation of the plan. Overall, the public process must be balanced, open, collaborative, and must help to build trust community-wide.

For Morgan County, the public involvement process was developed to create an outcome that secured support for, and approval of, the master plan by the county commissioners, county council, the parks and recreation board, civic organizations, and the community at large. The following methods were used to involve the citizens of Morgan County in the planning process:

- Community Survey
- Focus Groups
- Public Review of Draft Plan

FOCUS GROUPS

Two focus group meetings were conducted during the summer of 2014. The first was held at the Community Foundation of Morgan County at 7:00 p.m., July 2, 2014, and the second was held at 7:00 p.m., July 9, 2014, at the Grassyfork Fisheries Building. In total there were twenty-one members who participated in these focus group sessions, 16 of whom were members of the general public. Participants represented a diversity of groups in Morgan County, including:

- Monrovia Lions Club
- Mooresville Public Library
- Morgan County Master Gardeners
- Girl Scouts
- Mooresville Parks and Recreation
- Healthy Morgan County
- Morgan County Soil and Water Conservation District

Each focus group meeting was conducted using a focus group guide to ensure consistency of questioning. Participants were asked to provide written answers to the following questions/prompts:

1. What is the top ISSUE or problem for Morgan County Parks?
2. What group is most UNDERSERVED by Morgan County Parks?
3. What is the BEST THING about Morgan County Parks or that Morgan County Parks is doing?
4. What is your TOP PRIORITY or ambition for Morgan County Parks?
5. Describe your DREAM for Morgan County parks.

ISSUES

The two primary recurring themes brought out by focus group

participants in this category were funding and staffing. In addition to expressing concerns about funding existing and future facilities and programs, participants were concerned with the need for increasing staffing. Participants expressed a desire to have a Park Director and to be able to have a full- or part-time person with park management experience. Another issue for these participants was related to outreach. They did not feel like there was adequate or easily accessible information about park facilities and all the recreation activities in the county.

UNDERSERVED GROUPS

Focus group participants generally agreed that the most underserved groups are senior citizens and youth. For seniors, the primary factor was the lack of public transit. Monrovia, Morgantown, Brooklyn, and Eminence were mentioned as specific underserved areas.

With respect to type of recreation, people that wanted to engage in camping, hunting, and fishing were thought to be underserved.

BEST THING ABOUT MORGAN COUNTY PARKS

Participants felt that the Morgan County Parks Board was doing a good job of developing goals for the county park system and meeting those goals. They were positive about the rate of park land development and specifically about Burkhart Creek and the proposed development of Waverly park.

County resources were thought to be well used for the maintenance and care of park resources. There was approval for the focus on natural areas and for the development of the river greenway system.

TOP PRIORITIES

Securing more funding for the county parks was a major priority. The need was linked to the priority of acquiring and developing more park lands for preservation and recreational opportunities. Increasing park staffing to manage and maintain quality facilities was also identified as a high priority. A park in Monrovia was identified as a priority.

Focus group participants expressed the need for more walking and hiking trails throughout the county, specifically along the White River. A related priority is the development an interconnected trail system.

Several focus group participants felt that providing more overnight camping opportunities was a priority. The Link Observatory and the possibility of developing some arrangement with Indiana University to lease or cooperatively use the property was also indicated as a priority.

DREAM FOR MORGAN COUNTY PARKS

A main vision for Morgan County Parks were that there were parks dispersed throughout the county that all residents could enjoy.

Participants also expressed a desire for the parks to be destinations drawing visitors from near and far due to the quality array of offerings such as scenery, amenities, and events.

Another top dream for Morgan County is a network of parks connected to each other and to the county's population centers by multi-use trails.

A state-of-the-art Nature Center was also identified as part of the future vision for the parks. Specific types of parks envisioned included a skate park, lakeside park, and winter park.

PUBLIC SURVEY

An online survey questionnaire was developed using the MindMixer platform. The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board reviewed and edited the survey instrument until it met their satisfaction.

The online survey was directly distributed by the Morgan County Chamber of Commerce to 885 people. Survey invitations were also sent by representatives of Morgan County Parks, the Morgan County Master Gardeners, and the Soil and Water Conservation District to 94 people. In addition, a general invitation to the survey for the general public was provided on the Morgan County Parks website and Facebook page which was heavily visited by the general public.

SURVEY RESPONSES

A total of 225 unique visitors with unique IP addresses viewed the survey, and 30 actually filled out the survey. The majority of respondents were women (73%) and the average age was 51.

SUMMARY

The complete survey results can be found in Appendix C of this document. A summary of the results with the most important implications for this planning process is provided below.

The five most important park improvements are:

- Hiking and biking trails
- Nature parks
- Educational programs
- Hold events
- Tie between performance pavilion / develop Waverly Park / park beautification

The dream projects that ranked among the top two:

- Extensive trails
- Nature center
- Become a destination
- Tie between more green spaces /camping and fishing opportunities

Among the remaining questions and comments, other frequently mentioned facilities and activities include

- Dog parks
- Interpretation and education
- Skate park
- More contact with nature and the river

PUBLIC MEETING

An open public meeting was held as part of the Morgan County Parks Board meeting held at 6:00 p.m., November 25, 2014, at the Morgan County Administration Building in Martinsville. The meeting was advertised in the local newspaper, the Reporter-Times, in both Mooresville and Martinsville. The purpose of this meeting was to review a complete draft of the master plan document and offer the public an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments and suggestions for improvement. Unfortunately no members of the public attended the meeting. However the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board members in attendance were satisfied with the master plan document and made no comments or suggestions for improvement. Ms. Deb Verley, with Morgan County Commissioners office keeps records of all Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board meetings and makes those available to the general public on request.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Review and analysis of all the public input methods as a whole indicate several common themes related to parks and recreation facilities in Morgan County and the operations of the system itself. The maintenance needs of existing and proposed facilities and improvements makes funding and staffing key concerns for many. With regards to activities and facilities, the residents of Morgan County are most desirous of the following:

- Trails for walking/biking/hiking
- Nature parks
- More park programming, especially educational
- Nature center
- Connectivity between recreation facilities

It is recommended that securing additional operating and capital improvement funds and developing the above facilities and activities become the focus of the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board over the next five years in order to meet the needs and desires of county residents.



RECREATION TRENDS & NEEDS

RECREATION TRENDS

According to the 2011 Indiana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), outdoor recreation use in Indiana is increasing, which corresponds to a national trend. Hoosiers continue to enjoy outdoor activities that are close to home and the use and demand for local parks has increased.

Indiana's 2010 top ten outdoor activities ranked in order are

1. Hiking / Walking / Jogging
2. Camping
3. Picnicking
4. Fishing
5. Swimming
6. Boating / Water Skiing / Personal Watercraft
7. Golf
8. Bicycling
9. Hunting
10. Horseback Riding

TRAILS AND TRAIL-RELATED FACILITIES

Hoosiers' most preferred outdoor recreation activity are the pedestrian activities that include walking, hiking, running, and jogging. Hoosiers participated in trail activities in the following order: walking, biking, and hiking. The residents of Morgan County reported that walking and biking trails are the most desired park improvement, and these trends further support this idea.

Statewide, many kinds of trail use is growing in general. Hoosiers participated in trail activities for three top reasons: to be with family and friends; physical health; and mental health.

Trail users' (31% of respondents) most preferred improvement is better trail surfaces and there was also a high desire for the formation of walking, biking, and riding clubs (24% of respondents). Because of the diversity of trail users, providing more multi-use trail facilities would better serve the public need.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Hoosiers across all demographics are engaging in outdoor recreation activities because of an awareness of the positive effects of outdoor recreation on their health. Parks, recreation, and trails are a key component of Indiana's efforts to address the growing epidemic of obesity and obesity-related illnesses such as diabetes.

NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION

Consumptive resource-based recreation (hunting, fishing, and wild food gathering, etc.) remains very popular with Hoosiers. A growing area of outdoor recreation activities is non-consumptive and includes such things as bird watching, camping, swimming, nature

photography, and observation. Camping has increased in popularity over the last decade, becoming the second most preferred activity in Indiana. Morgan County residents ranked a nature center as one of the top desires.

Non-traditional outdoor recreation activities are gaining in popularity. Hoosiers are increasing their participation in activities such as disc golf, outdoor spectator/sports events, orienteering, caving/spelunking, and nature photography. Nationally, orienteering, which uses a map and compass to navigate a pre-set course, increased 58.6% from 1999 - 2008.

LOCAL PARKS & RECREATION USE

The demand and use of local parks is increasing. In general, outdoor activities that are inexpensive are preferred by Hoosiers, and recreating close to home saves fuel costs.

The increased desire for health and wellness is also a likely driver of this trend. Local parks and recreation more easily support the desire to increase the frequency of healthy activity in daily life.

ACCESSIBILITY

Morgan County residents aged 65 or older comprise approximately 15% of the population. This number will increase steadily. With an aging population, many Indiana municipalities develop ADA transition plans and continue to take greater measures to make trails and facilities accessible to all populations. In many cases, municipalities are restructuring current maintenance projects to include making facilities accessible. The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board has acknowledged this trend and intends to include accessibility planning in all new projects.

RECREATION NEEDS ANALYSIS

At the county level, Morgan County exceeds the guidelines set by the Indiana SCORP, primarily due to the facilities provided by the Morgan-Monroe State Forest and Bradford Woods. Local facilities near population centers such as Martinsville and Mooresville add numerous additional opportunities. Therefore, as with the previous county master plan, this plan will not employ a rigorous Level of Service analysis.

This plan is informed by the public input process, two excellent focus group sessions with local stakeholders, a review of the benchmark study done previously, and common sense strategizing. The appropriateness of this approach is reinforced with the knowledge of the “full plate” that the MCPB already has set before it, which includes ongoing work associated with the development of Waverly County Park, as well as a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) trail along the White River.



ORGANIZATION AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

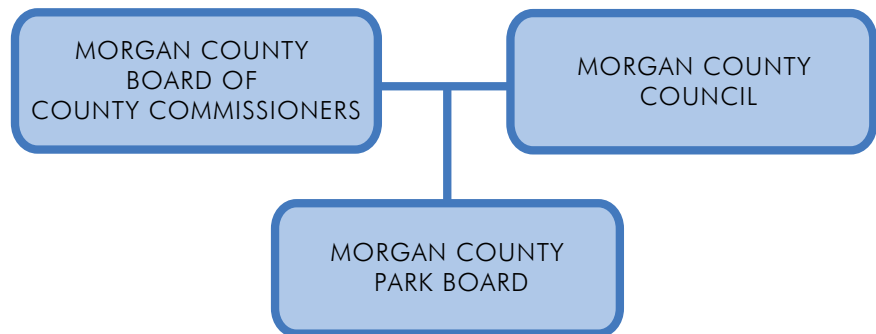
ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

The Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board is made up of seven members serving four year staggering terms. Members are appointed by several entities within the county government structure as follows:

- The 4-H Extension office—1 member
- The Soil and Water Conservation District—1 member
- The Morgan County Commissioners—1 member
- The Morgan County Council—2 members
- The Morgan County Circuit Court Judge—2 members

The Morgan County Commissioners administrative assistant provides some administrative assistance to the Parks and Recreation Board. There is no other staff. The parks and recreation board contracts on a temporary basis with consultants to provide services as needed.

The Parks and Recreation Board reports to the Morgan County Council and Commissioners as depicted below.



BUDGET REVIEW

The budget allocation for 2014 was \$26,035. These funds covered items such as dues for the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association and the Martinsville and Mooresville Chambers of Commerce; booth fees at the 4-H fair and Old Settlers Festival; some administrative equipment purchases; equipment and supplies for the maintenance of Burkhart Creek County Park; and consulting fees.

The approved appropriation for 2015 is the same as the 2014 appropriation and will likely be used for similar expenses. An increase in the budget for subsequent years will be necessary as new facilities come online.

In addition to the county appropriation, local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) monies have been appropriated for use by the MCPB for the development of Waverly County Park. Overseeing the disbursement of these funds will be a primary responsibility of the board over the next several years. The \$150,000 grant received by Morgan County from the Recreational Trails Program in 2012 is already supporting initial development efforts of the Waverly County Park.

It is anticipated that the overall county budget will continue to be strained and that parks and recreation appropriation will likely remain at its current levels with minor increases or decreases depending on the needs of the board and its operations related to Burkhart Creek County Park and, once developed, Waverly County Park.

Increasing funding and staffing are two of the overarching goals of the park board, and it is expected that funding for capital expenses and new park developments over the next five years will be sought from outside sources such as grants and donations. In addition, the park board will be exploring the legal requirements, feasibility, and funding for the establishment of a Morgan County Parks and Recreation Foundation.



STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & ACTION ITEMS

This strategic action plan builds on the previous one and represents the culmination of all the information collected in the planning process and identifies specific action items for the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board to focus on during the next five years. It includes five overarching goals:

GOAL I: FUNDING

Identify and secure funding sources for the operations and maintenance of Morgan County Parks

GOAL II: FACILITIES

Provide parks and recreation facilities according to the needs of the residents of Morgan County

GOAL III: STAFFING

Develop Morgan County Parks & Recreation Staff

GOAL IV: PROGRAMMING

Develop programs and events in Morgan County Parks

GOAL V: OUTREACH

Raise awareness of Morgan County Parks and Recreation facilities and programs

Each goal has one or more objectives. Each objective has one or more specific action items to be accomplished by the Morgan County Parks and Recreation Board. The strategic action plan serves as the guide for the development, maintenance, and operation of parks and recreation facilities in Morgan County for the next five years.

The plan should be referred to and reviewed regularly by the parks and recreation board. Timelines should be adjusted to account for unexpected circumstances and/or new opportunities. Grant opportunities, actions by other departments or other government agencies, or natural disasters could all be examples of situations that might require the adjustment of timelines within the action plan.

As seen on the following page, action item status and the outlook for completion – short term or long term – is indicated. The objectives and action items are also coded as being “new”, and based on feedback received from the public survey, “incomplete and pushed by the public” or “incomplete and not pushed by the public”.

The strategic action plan contains more than is possible or feasible for the parks and recreation board to accomplish within this five year planning timeframe. Because unexpected opportunities may arise it behooves the board and the residents of Morgan County to list all foreseeable actions so that favorable opportunities can be capitalized on if available.

STRATEGIC PLAN			DONE	ONGOING	PENDING	
					SHORT TERM	LONG TERM
GOAL I FUNDING						
Identify and secure funding sources for the operations and maintenance of Morgan County Parks						
OBJECTIVE A	Evaluate the feasibility of creating a revenue producing event in the spring or summer season to support parks and recreation operations					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Identify new and existing events and contact potential sponsors			✓	
OBJECTIVE B	Create a Morgan County Parks and Recreation Foundation					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Explore funding, legal requirements, feasibility			✓	
OBJECTIVE C	Establish and maintain intergovernmental partnerships for maintenance and operations of parks and facilities					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Explore the possibility of an intergovernmental agreement with the Morgan County Highway department and/or the Community Corrections to maintain the trail facilities at Burkhart Creek County Park	✓			
OBJECTIVE D	Establish and maintain public-private partnerships for maintenance and operations of parks and facilities					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Contact lawncare service providers to see about mowing and maintenance donations			✓	
GOAL II FACILITIES						
Provide parks and recreation facilities according to the needs of the residents of Morgan County						
OBJECTIVE A	Complete currently funded development of Burkhart Creek County Park					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Complete planned development of Duckworth Road site at Burkhart Creek County Park	✓			
	2	Complete construction of RTP grant funded facilities at Warthen Road site at Burkhart Creek County Park	✓			
OBJECTIVE B	Develop recreational access to the White River					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Coordinate with plan commission and county commissioners to determine best use of flood remediation properties at Waverly	✓			
	2	Apply for a grant to develop a park at the Waverly site	✓			
OBJECTIVE C	Where feasible and applicable, highlight historic preservation and interpretation of cultural heritage in new park facilities					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Preserve historic features at Waverly Park		✓		
	2	Incorporate interpretive signage into Waverly Park design		✓		
OBJECTIVE D	Develop camping facilities					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Evaluate the feasibility of developing a camping facility				✓
OBJECTIVE E	Provide picnic shelters and picnic areas in conjunction with new park facilities where possible					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Determine locations for picnic shelters and picnic areas		✓		
OBJECTIVE F	Evaluate opportunities to share resources and/or collaborate with other area organizations to provide recreation opportunities					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Explore the possibility of an agreement with Bradford Woods for use of its recreation facilities by Morgan County residents		✓		
OBJECTIVE G	Secure funding/support to develop new parks and/or facilities					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Evaluate opportunities to share resources and/or collaborate with other area organizations to provide recreation opportunities		✓		
	2	Apply for a grant to develop new parks and/or facilities		✓		
OBJECTIVE H	Design, plan, and construct new recreation facilities for accessibility by all populations with special consideration for the needs of an aging population					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Exceed minimum accessibility standards when possible in designing and constructing new facilities			✓	
	2	Specifically seek input from people with disabilities and elders when designing new facilities			✓	
OBJECTIVE I	Facilitate the development of recreational trails in Morgan County					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Designate a park board member(s) to attend meetings or monitor minutes of the Morgan County Commissioners, Morgan County Transportation Board, and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization	✓			
	2	Evaluate and determine an appropriate leadership structure for a county-wide committee to focus on all recreational trail opportunities		✓		
OBJECTIVE J	Develop a Nature Center					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Evaluate the feasibility of developing a Nature Center			✓	
OBJECTIVE K	Plan Waverly grand opening to coincide with Bicentennial in 2016					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Develop work plan and schedule of events			✓	
OBJECTIVE L	Develop a park in Monrovia					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Assist the local community with the process of acquiring and developing a facility				✓
GOAL III STAFFING						
Develop Morgan County Parks & Recreation Staff						
OBJECTIVE A	Establish public-private arrangement or endowment/foundation for operational expenses					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Identify potential sources, develop framework for relationship, contact key stakeholders			✓	
OBJECTIVE B	Hire a full time Director					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Create job description, network with potential candidates, and release advertisement			✓	
OBJECTIVE C	Evaluate staffing needs (full time/part time/contract)					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Determine need, create job description, network with potential candidates, and release advertisement			✓	
GOAL IV PROGRAMMING						
Develop programs and events in Morgan County Parks						
OBJECTIVE A	Explore opportunities to partner with other organizations to collaborate on developing educational programming about nature					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Conduct outreach to groups and organizations informing them of park facilities and availability		✓		
OBJECTIVE B	Explore opportunities to host running, walking or bicycling competitions.					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Conduct outreach to fitness/sports groups and organizations informing them of park facilities and availability		✓		
OBJECTIVE C	Evaluate needs and opportunities for additional programming					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Develop workshop and museum work plans (Waverly)		✓		
GOAL V OUTREACH						
Raise awareness of Morgan County Parks and Recreation facilities and programs						
OBJECTIVE A	Update Morgan County Parks and Recreation branding					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Evaluate current logo and other branding items			✓	
	2	Consider logo redesign and development of suite of promotional materials			✓	
OBJECTIVE B	Inform the public about programs and events					
	ACTION ITEM 1	Issue press releases once a month to local papers for programs and events		✓		
	2	Develop a parks column in a local paper		✓		

LEGEND
COMPLETE
NEW
INCOMPLETE / PUSHED BY PUBLIC
INCOMPLETE / NOT PUSHED BY PUBLIC



GRANTS & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): Provides 80% grant/20% local funding. Funding is available for trails and for basic trailhead facilities. This could include monies for not only the trail, but also for construction of parking, toilet rooms, shelters and other basic improvements at the county park projects. There is no funding limit. TAP funds, which were formerly called Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds, now include Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funding, which promotes walkability and bikability within a two-mile radius of K-12 school facilities.

IDNR – Recreational Trails Program (RTP): RTP provides 80% grant/20% local funding for acquisition and development of multi-use trails. Funding is more limited than TAP funds, but still could provide grants of up to \$150,000.

IDNR – Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF): LWCF provides 50% grant/50% local funding for the development of park facilities. It would be more appropriate for development of one of the county park facilities than for trails itself.

IDNR, Division of Outdoor Recreation – Special Grants: IDNR provided special grants of \$200,000 to \$1.0 million for development of greenways systems in 2008. While not through a competitive grant program, it reinforces the need to keep IDNR aware of projects and the need for improvements.

Brownfield Grants – Inventories should be checked to determine if any brownfields are designated in project areas. Grants are available for the funding of brownfield projects.

CDBG funding: OCRA provides 90% grant/10% local funding for community development projects from Community Development Block Grants. While OCRA does not normally provide funds for park and recreation oriented activities, they do finance historic preservation projects. This could be used to assist in developing facilities at the proposed Waverly County Park.

Historic Preservation Fund: offers 50% matching grants for acquisition, restoration, and preservation of historic properties.

REMC Operation Round-up: provides grants up to \$10,000 per year for organizations serving the community.

Lilly Endowment: supports facilities and programs that help advance the city's economic revitalization and community recreational opportunities.

Vectren Foundation: Conservation of and education about natural resources or sound environmental practices.

Kendrick Foundation: funds projects to benefit the health of Morgan County residents.

Morgan County Community Foundation: supports projects related to social services, the environment, and the arts.

Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society (INPAWS): offers small grants that promote the appreciation, preservation, conservation, utilization, and scientific study of the flora native to Indiana and to educate the public about the values, beauty, diversity, and environmental importance of indigenous vegetation.

Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM): seeks replacement wetlands for projects requiring Section 401 Water Quality Certification. Opportunities to create wetlands for replacements may arise on Morgan County park properties.

Indiana Department of Fish and Wildlife Lakes and Rivers Enhancement Program (LARE): offers grants to protect and enhance aquatic habitat for fish and wildlife and to insure the continued viability of Indiana's publicly accessible lakes and streams for multiple uses, including recreational opportunities.



APPENDICES

- A: Park Inventory Sheets**
- B: Focus Groups**
- C: Community Recreation Demand Survey**
- D: Public Meeting**
- E: Base Map**
- F: Waverly Park Plan**

Appendix A

Park Inventory Sheets



Facility Inventory Form

Site Name: Burkhart Creek Owner: Morgan County P&R
Address: _____ Manager: Morgan County P&R
City/State/Zip: Paragon, IN 46166 System Relationship: _____
Phone: 765-342-1007 Email: _____ Other: _____
Website: http://morgancountyparks.org/parks/burkhart/index.shtml
Site Code: _____

Type Information

Facility Type: ☒ Park/Recreation ☐ Playground ☐ Fish & Wildlife ☒ Nature Preserve
(Primary Uses) ☐ Reservoir ☐ Historic/Cultural Site ☐ Fishing/Boating ☐ Beach
☐ Camping ☒ Trail/Hiking/Biking ☐ Trailhead/Plaza ☐ Pool
☐ Fairground ☐ School Playground ☐ Sports Complex ☐ Golf Course
☐ Concession/Rental ☐ Other: _____

Public Access: Full ☒ Partial ☐ None ☐

Time Open: Year-Round ☒ Seasonal ☐

Fees: No ☒ Yes ☐ If so _____

Pets Allowed: No ☐ Yes ☒ Restrictions? leash

Description

Context: Newly created nature/hiking park with wetland and wildlife habitat along small creek along the western edge; trails include asphalt and stone; mostly flat with some trails leading to high point on wooded hill; ample parking; surrounding area includes agriculture and natural areas (Morgan Monroe State Forest).

Total Acreage: 83 acres Land: 76.5 Water: n/a Wetlands: approx. 6.5 acres

Associated Facilities: _____

Construction Date/History: Land donated by IDNR in 2007; plans developed completed in 2012 with construction soon after. Land belonged to the Grounds family until Indianapolis Power and Light purchased it in 1976 and subsequently donated it to the IDNR.

Programs: The Morgan County Parks & Recreation Board recently (summer 2014) approved an agreement allowing a local astronomy club to use the site for nighttime viewing with prior notice.

Maintenance Notes (Preventative, Planned, Seasonal, Reactive): _____

In general the park is very well maintained and clean with all amenities in good condition. Agreement in place with county corrections for mowing, trash, trail maintenance, etc. Limited funding for this agreement. Contracted with service provider to maintain portable toilets.

Design Notes/Ideas: _____

Enhanced interpretation elements; improve trail to hilltop shelter; culvert required on south end where wash out is developing across trail

Features

Overall Site

Amenity	Present	ADA Issues	Other
Formal Design			
Ped. Circulation	x	some limitations	
Ped. Access to site			site is remote
Vehicle Circulation	x		limited to two parking areas
Vehicle Access to site			
Physical access to site	x	difficult from lot on Duckworth Rd.	by foot/bike from parking lots
Views into site	x		
Trees	x		
Identity Sign	x		
Site Lighting			
Trash Containers	x		
Recycling Containers			
Dog Waste Amenity			
Plumbing at site			
Electrical at site			
Internet at site			
Public Telephone			

Open Space Areas

Amenity	Present	Size	ADA Issues	Other
Lawn/Field	x	~1000 SF		
Woods/Forest	x			
Prairie	x			
Open Water	x			wetland
River				
Creek	x	varies (cut)	no access	

Stand-Alone Toilets/Plumbing

Amenity	Yes	No	#	# ADA	On ADA Path	Other
Water Fountain						
Spigot						
Well Pump						
Flush Toilet						
Pit Toilet						
Portable Toilet	x		2	1	yes	
Shower						

Outdoor Picnic/Eating

Gravel lot area/Paved lot area/Creek overlook

Amenity	Yes	No	#	# ADA	On ADA Path	Other
Picnic Tables	x		3/2/1	0	0/2/1	not ADA-specific tables but can be accessed
Other Seating Area	x				yes/no	benches throughout park; both on and off ADA trails
Shelter	x		2	1	no/yes/na	
Fireplace/Chimney						
Fire pit						
Grill	x		1/1/na	0	no/yes/na	

Playground Features N/A

Amenity	Yes	No	#	# ADA	On ADA Path	Other
Seating Area						Shaded?
Lighting?						
Slide						Open?__ Tube?__
Swing						Baby?__ Basket?__
Roundabout						
Sandbox						
Aerial Rotat./May Pole						
Spring Rider						
Climbing Bar Structure						
Balance Beam						
See Saw/Teeter Totter						
Pull-up Bars						
Monkey Bars						
Multi-level Structure						
Platform						
Activity Panel						
Sliding Pole						
Climber Net						
Horizontal Tube						

Athletic Features/Areas N/A

Amenity	Yes	No	#	ADA Accessible	Field Lit	Other
Disc Golf						
Dog Park						
Baseball Field						
Softball Field						
Batting Cage						
Soccer Field						
Football Field						
Track						
BMX						
Skating Ring						
Skateboard						
Multi-use Fields						
Basketball Court						
Tennis Court						
Wall Courts						
Volleyball						
Horseshoes						
Shuffleboard						

*Note associated bleachers, towers, etc.

Trails

Amenity	Form	Surface	Distance	Use	Interpretive	Other
Facility trail	Loop	Stone	1.25 miles	Walk/run/bike	Yes	Int. signage, bat/bird houses
Facility trail	Loop	Asphalt	.76 miles	Walk/run/bike	No	

Building/Facilities N/A

Amenity	Yes	No	#	ADA Accessible	Braille	Other
Amphitheater						Natural___ Built___ Combo___
Observation Stand						
Community Center						
Conference Center						
Outdoor Education						
Museum						
Nature Center						
Garden						Type?
Senior Center						
Visitor Center						
Zoo						
Concessions (not pool)						

Signage

Amenity	Yes	No	#	ADA Accessible	Braille	Other
Directional Signage	x			no	no	To park; none interior
Directional Sign. (ext)	x			no	no	From SR 67
Interpretive Signage	x			no	no	Too high to be seen from wheelchair
Interpretive Kiosk						
Memorial Marker	x			yes	no	Plaques on small boulders

Water N/A

Amenity	Present	Size	ADA Issues	Other/Hours
Swimming				
Wading/Tot				
Diving				High?
Water Slide				
Water Park				
Splash Park				
Fountain				
Bath/Beach house				
Showers				
Lifeguard				
Beachfront				
Beach Swim allowed				
Beach Swim area				
Beach Swim pier				
Concessions				
Boating allowed				No Motor___ Sail___ Electric___ Gas___ Rec. ___
Boat ramp				Natural___ Paved___ Hand carry only___
Boat Rental				
Moorings/Piers				
Equipment Rental				
Fishing allowed				Regular___ Fly___
Fishing Dock/Pier				
Cleaning Station				

Parking

Amenity	Number	ADA Issues	Other
Entrances/Exits	2	Rustic lot inaccessible	Rustic lot best for overflow or unloading
Spaces	22		All at paved lot; none marked at rustic lot
ADA Spaces	2	Van? Yes	
Pedestrian Conflicts			None
Loading/Unloading			Rustic lot

Appendix B

Focus Groups

DATE: July 2, 2014

LOCATION: Community Foundation of Morgan County

Emma Alkire
Terry Brock
Janice Brummett
Jerry Brummett
Brent Callahan
Susan Haynes
Greg Howard
Joni James
Tammy Payton
Donna Polky
Gary Swaim
Bud Swisher

DATE: July 9, 2014

LOCATION: Grassy Fork Fisheries Building

Don Adams
Diana Catt
Tasha Daugherty
Craig Fenneman
Kenny Hale
Diane Huerkamp
David Mow
Jeff Quyle
Joe Tutterow



Appendix C

Community Recreation Demand Survey



Public Survey Questions & Responses

Question 1

How frequently do members of your household use a public park?

Once/twice a year

7 votes

Every other month

4 votes

Once/twice a month

11 votes

Once a week or more

5 votes

I don't know

0 votes

Question 2

How frequently do members of your household use Burkhart Creek Park?

Once/twice a year

6 votes

Every other month

1 vote

Once/twice a month

1 vote

Once a week or more

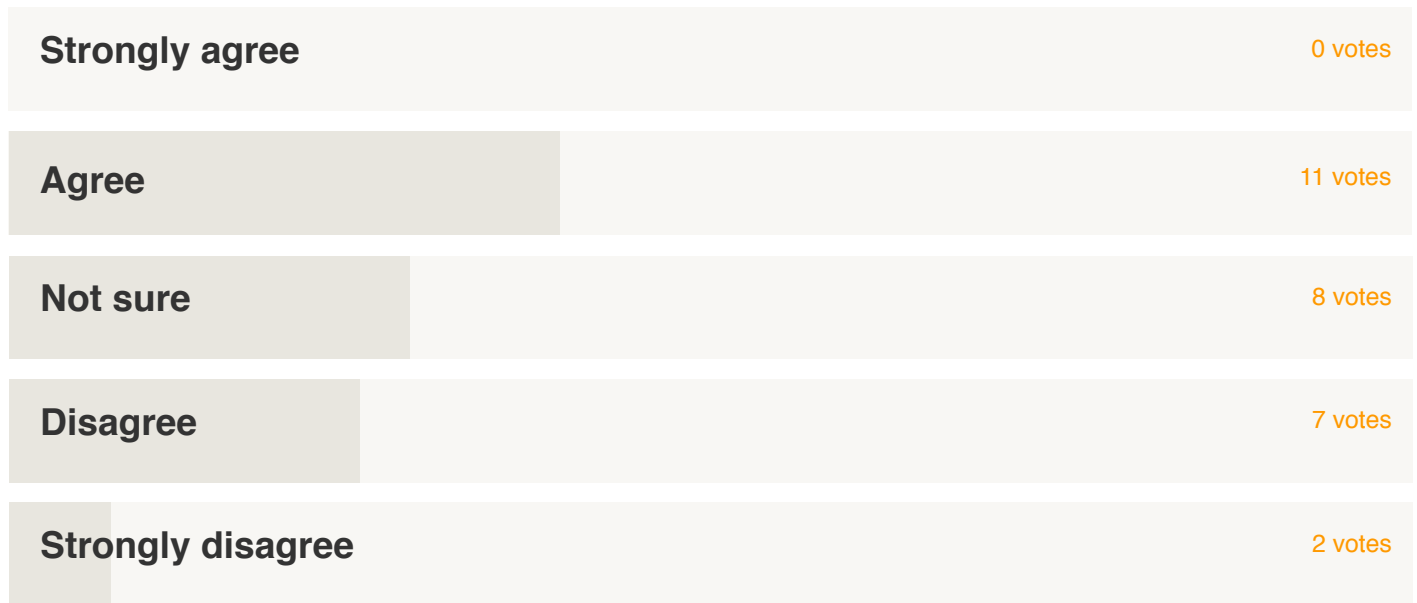
1 vote

I don't know

12 votes

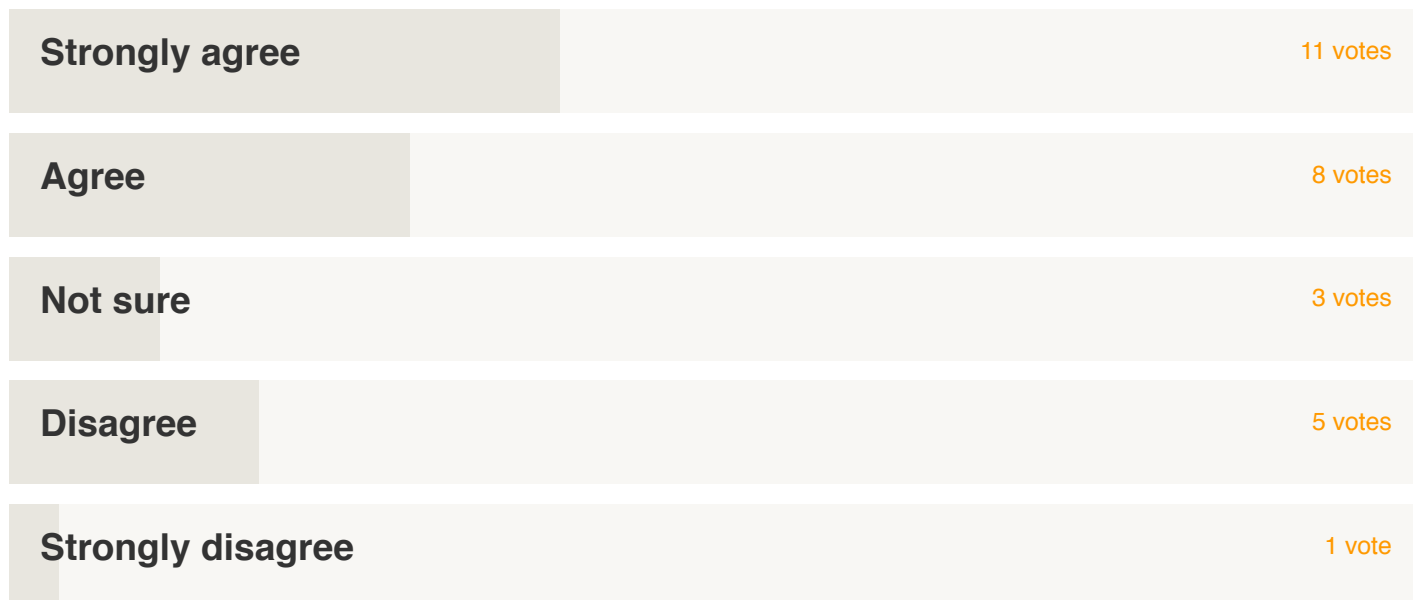
Question 3

Morgan County does a good job of providing parks.



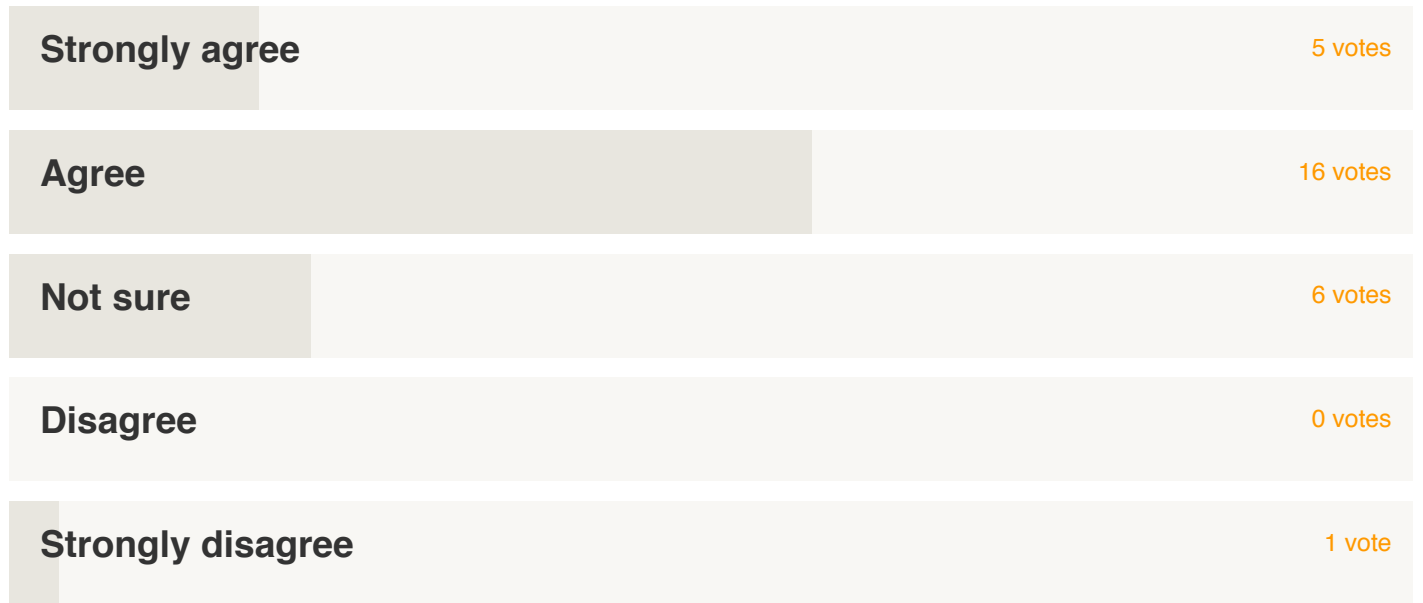
Question 4

Morgan County needs parks at new locations.



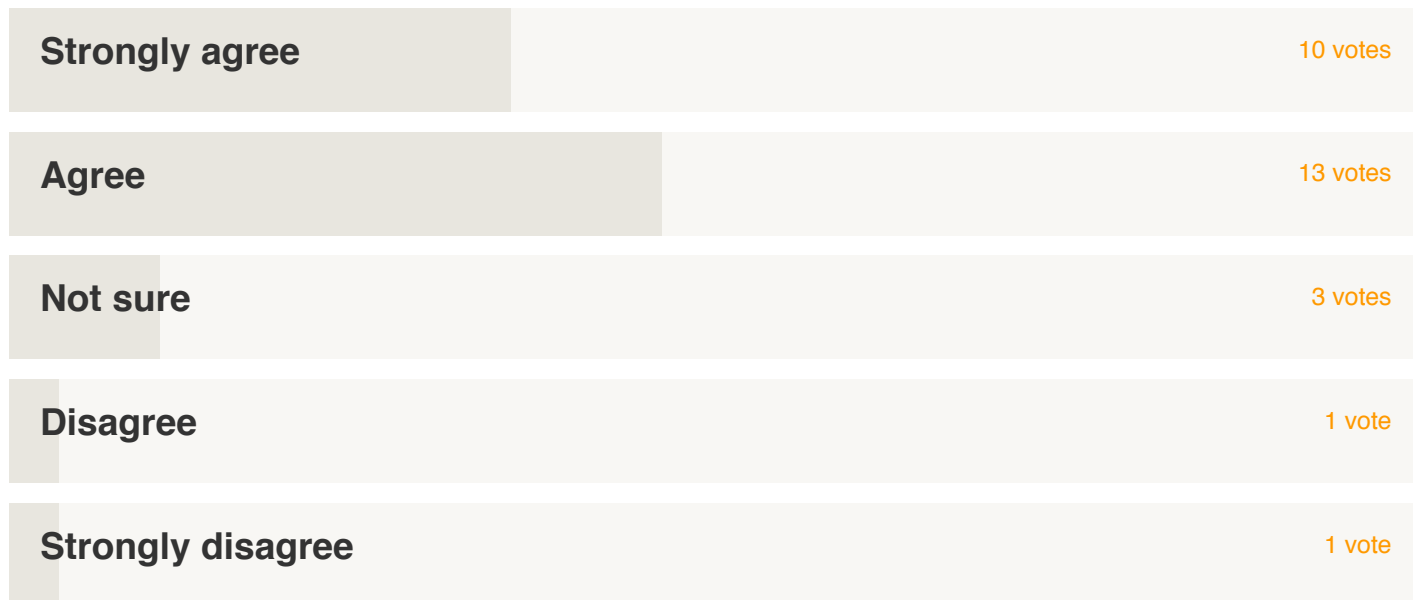
Question 5

Morgan County needs new facilities at existing parks.



Question 6

Morgan County should provide programs and events.



Question 7

Please list up to three park facilities or programs that, if added, you would use:

?

Additional trails (paved or unpaved) Interpretive programs (information about nature in general, history of land that is now parks property, why/how the glaciers stopped in this area and how that's affected the county and its development) River access for fishing, walking along the water, etc. Outdoor entertainment facility or amphitheater near the river - for interpretive programs, live music, activities, etc. Campground facilities

Amphitheater at Pioneer Park in Mooresville that would also fit into the flow of the Old Settlers and other events held at the park. More running/jogging trails. Other events--bicycle, running competitions or fundraiser.

Connected trails, more nature parks, educational programming

Dog park Swimming lessons Organized walking

Dog park!!!!

Dog park. There are sooo many dogs. And I can't believe we still don't have a skateboard park!!

hiking trails, rest rooms, picnic area that has a shelter with a fireplace

Indoor Acquatic Center like Plainfield.

Jimmy Nash City Park-Nature programs led by Master Naturalist program participants (they need service hours to obtain their certification), or Boy Scouts; i.e. Plant/Tree/Flower identification, Insects, Stargazing, Nature Hikes, Night Hikes

More walking trails. How about a trail from north to south and east to west?

Nature center, Wildlife exhibit, Gardens

Nature talks; gardening tips; exercise programs.

paved walking trails, bathrooms available

Trails, WAlking and Bike, quite, shade

Walking trails, bicycling trails

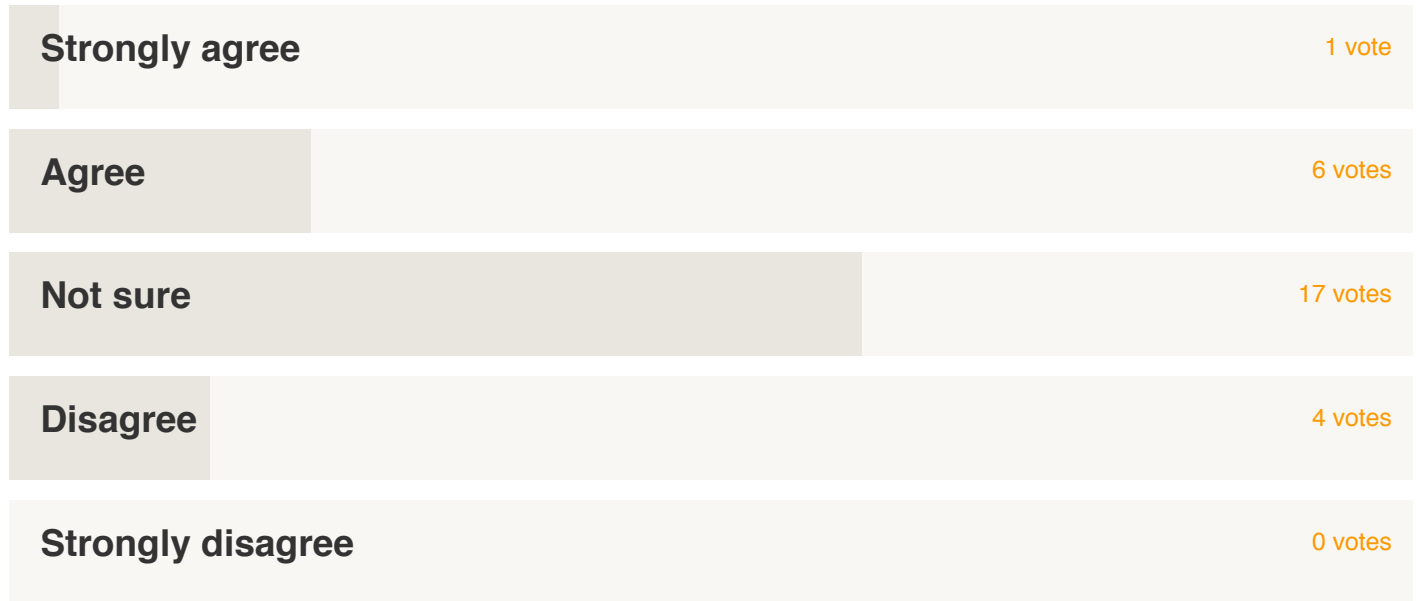
Waverly Mooresville Martinsville

waverly park

Youth and teen programs, volleyball courts, biking trails, eay access for disabled persons.

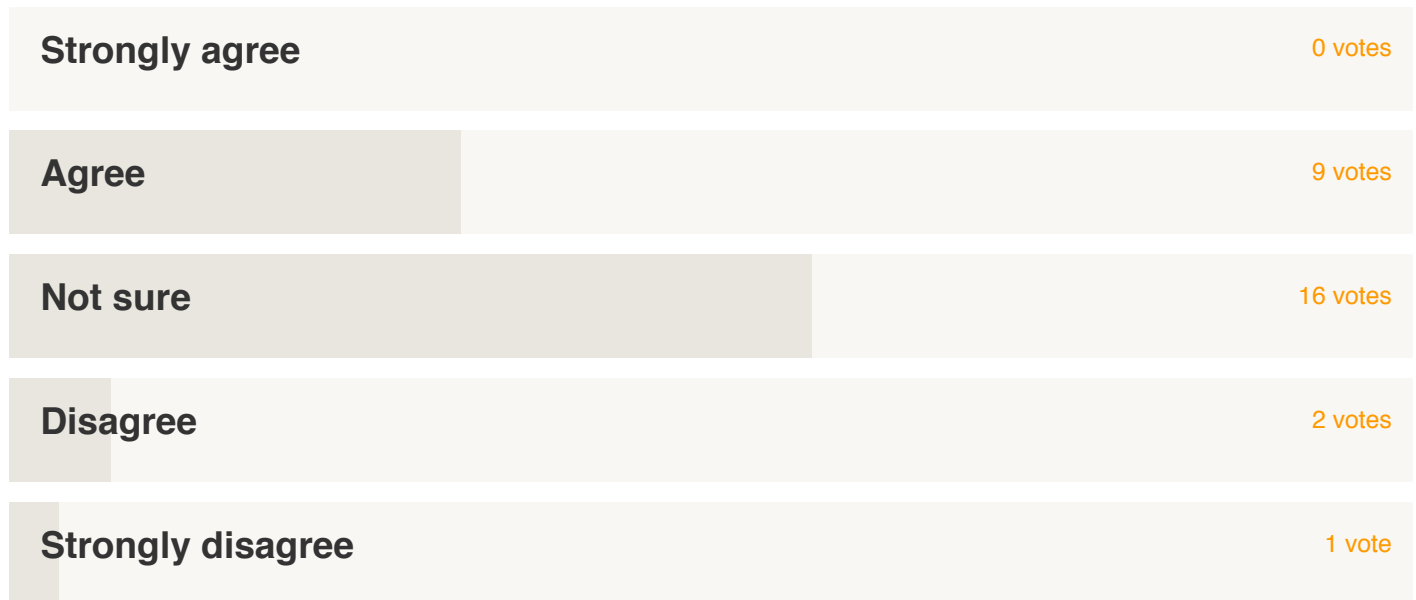
Question 8

The Morgan County park system serves people with disabilities well.



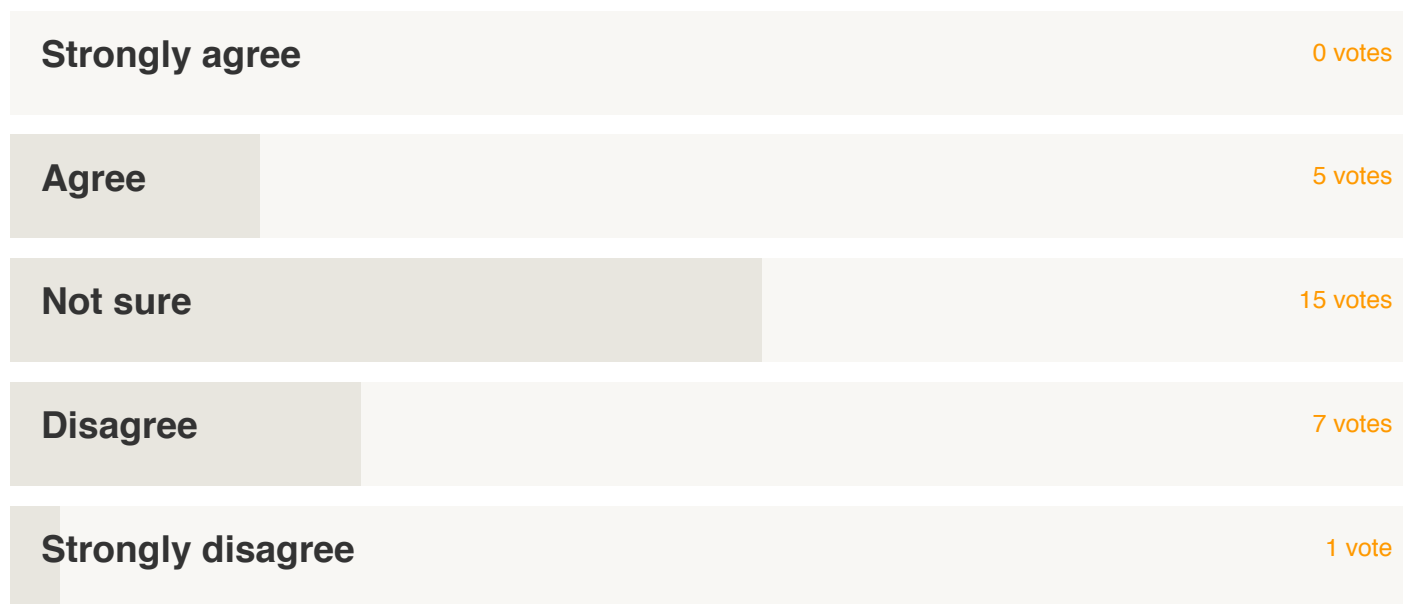
Question 9

The Morgan County park system serves seniors well.



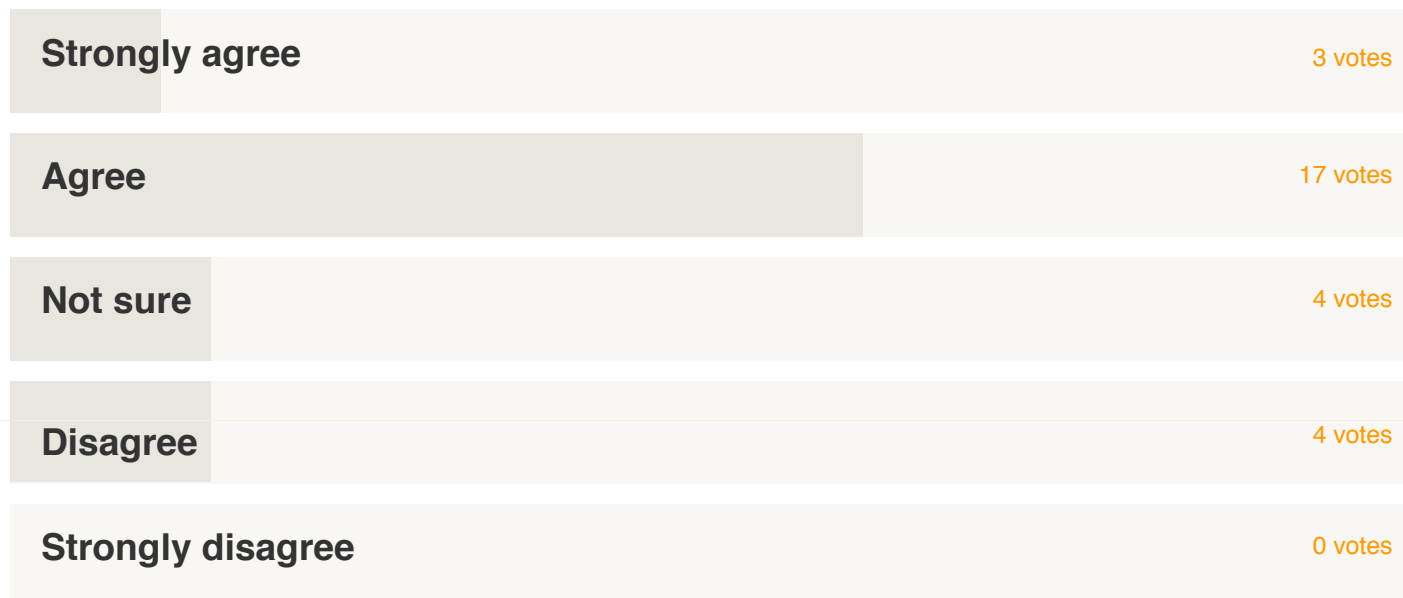
Question 10

The Morgan County park system serves teens well.



Question 11

The Morgan County park system serves young children well.



Question 12

Are there any other groups who could be served better by the park system? Who?

.

?

A skateboard park would be a great addition to Pioneer and/or Jimmy Nash. There are grants out there (Tony Hawk Foundation) that will match community funds that are raised. Plainfield has a great skateboard park!

Dog owners

fishermen, boaters on the white River

It would be nice for horse owner to be able to use the parks to . So we don't have to all ways go out side of county to ride.we stall here and spent are money.

Seniors, Teens, and Children could be served better if we had more parks in a variety of locations-- closer to more living areas.

Special needs adults and children.

Special needs groups

walkers

Question 13

What is the best way to inform people of park news/events?

Local newspaper (2)

Local newspaper and radio. Really like the new sign at Jimmy Nash that posts events.

Newsletters, newspapers, radio, tv.

newspaper and email

newspaper, county tourism website

newspaper, facebook/twitter

newspapers

newspapers in and outside county, Facebook page

Postal mail, believe it or not, not all people have computers nor take the local paper.

Radio, Facebook, Newspaper, CVB website

Radio, newspaper, Facebook, banners

Reporter-Times, Billboards, Flyers

social media

social media and/or email

text blasts, email blasts, hanging banners throughout the town or region to draw spectators and/or participants

Website & emails

email

E-mails

Facebook and email.

Facebook, newspaper, direct mail.

Question 14

How does your household use the parks?

For group gatherings and for kids to play.

Grandkids

hiking and picnics

Hiking, nature photography, picnic

hiking, picnics

kids playing, sport, shelterhouses

Love the trail. We hike it often. Love the new 1/4 mile walking trail use it daily. Love the pool. Buy a pass and swim laps daily. We help put up lights etc. at Christmas at the Jimmy Nash park and see those nightly. Occasionally use the shelter houses. The new playground is used by our grandchildren often. And Love sledding on the big hill.

Occasionally we use a shelter for a large family function. Otherwise there is nothing much else there that is of interest to our family.

Outside pavillions, pool and playground.

picnic/playtime

picnics, running/jogging/walking, snow sledding, attending park events

Shelter house at Jimmy Nash Park fir large family get togethers

Walk the dogs

Walking

Walking and family reunions

Walking trails, enjoying nature, watching for wildlife.

walking, bird watching, exploring, nature study, photography, dog walking, bicycling

Walking, hiking, nature watching, exercising, learning about native plants and animals, camping, picnicking...

Walking, nature viewing

Walking, playing with grandchildren. Performing there with the Martinsville Community Band

Walking, birding

We rent shelter houses, have a child that plays on playground, attend events like pumpkins @ the park and Christmas @ the park

Question 15

From the following list, choose the five most important park improvements for your household:

Overnight camping facilities

5 votes

New hiking and biking trails

18 votes

Nature park

16 votes

Performance pavilion

8 votes

Skate park

3 votes

Park beautification

9 votes

More open space

3 votes

Sports fields

4 votes

Update Burkhart Creek

3 votes

Develop Waverly Park

8 votes

Educational programs

15 votes

Offer lessons

5 votes

Hold events

9 votes

Create opportunities to use river

7 votes

Question 16

What is your dream for the Morgan County park system?

.

Amphitheater at Jimmy Nash Park

Become a destination in Morgan County. Safe, family fun and relaxation.

connecting hiking trails

I would love to see the parks cleaned up and usable. I have noticed the clean up process has started and I LOVE the work everyone is doing. The new equipment is great and the shelter houses are clean. I want to see walking and biking trails added around the city. Keep adding programs at the parks for children and teens.

More green spaces. More nature parks in variety of locations within county and that offer a variety of habitats. Connected trails/paths. Parks in safe areas (cell reception for safety reasons), educational programming, County Parks Administrator, interpretive naturalists, nature center

State of the art exhibits, destination for nature and wildlife

That we will have an indoor aquatic center that will rival or be better than Plainfield.

To be dog friendly, off leash dog area

To be used by all, all the time, in a safe/family friendly environment

To connect with parks in surrounding counties providing opportunities for nature and people to have an unbroken corridor in Central Indiana. For example, I love how Marion County has connected the Monon trail with White River State Park, and I would like to see an unbroken corridor continue from

that park system south through Morgan County, connecting to Morgan-Monroe State Forest, and eventually south down to Brown County State Park.

To have more outlets for families and teen involvement. To see a volunteer program set up for park beautification. To have an active mailing list of the parks available.

to have more parks created around the White river which is currently underused

To keep improving like they have this year at the JN City park.

Updating the area at the top of the hill at Jimmy Nash as well as including paved walking trails and having bathrooms available. Pioneer Park in Mooresville is our favorite, but it is not always reasonable for us to get there.

Walking/biking trail north and south and east and west

Question 17

Rank the dream projects listed below from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most desired. Type your rankings in the box provided.

Extensive trail/path networking linking parks around the county

7 votes

Rankings:

14 votes

(1) Nature Center, (2) Extensive Trails, (3) Camping/Fishing, (4) Destination, (5) Green Spaces

1 - extensive trail/path network 2 - nature center 3 - camping/fishing facilities 4 - become a destination (events & facilities) 5 - numerous green spaces throughout the county

1 extensive trail/path linking 2 numerous green spaces 3 nature center 4 camping/fishing 5 Become a

1- Numerous green spaces throughout county 2- Extensive trail/path networking 3- Camping/fishing facilities 4-Nature center 5-Become a destination for out-of-towners

1 trail and path, 2 green space, 3 nature center, 4 camping and fishing, 5 Destination

1) Become a destination; 2) Extensive Trails

1) Extensive trail/path networking, 2) Become a destination, 3) Camping, 4) Numerous Green spaces

1. Nature center 2. Destination for visitors 3. Camping and fishing 4. Trails connected throughout 5. Green spaces

1.Extensive trail/path networking linking parks around the county 2. Nature Center 3. Green Spaces 4. Camping/fishing facilities 5. Destination for out of towners (which will happen organically if you do 1-4)

1camping. 2-nature center, 3-networking/linking, 4-green spaces, 5-destination for out of towners

Camping 1, active nature center 2, accessible paths 3, events 4

Nature center, walking trails, destination facility, green spaces, fishing/camping

There are so many beautiful places in our county and it's great to see them walking or riding bikes. We need more bike friendly spaces. Like blue Bluff. If it only had a bike lane because so many bikers use this dangerous road.

Trails #1

Nature center

1 vote

Become a destination for out-of-towners (events and facilities)

1 vote

Camping/fishing facilities

1 vote

Numerous green spaces throughout the county

0 votes

Question 18

What are the ages of the individuals in your household? Choose all that apply.

Under 5

4 votes

5 to 11

3 votes

12 to 17

4 votes

18 to 25

2 votes

26 to 40

6 votes

41 to 60

17 votes

61 to 75

8 votes

Over 75

0 votes

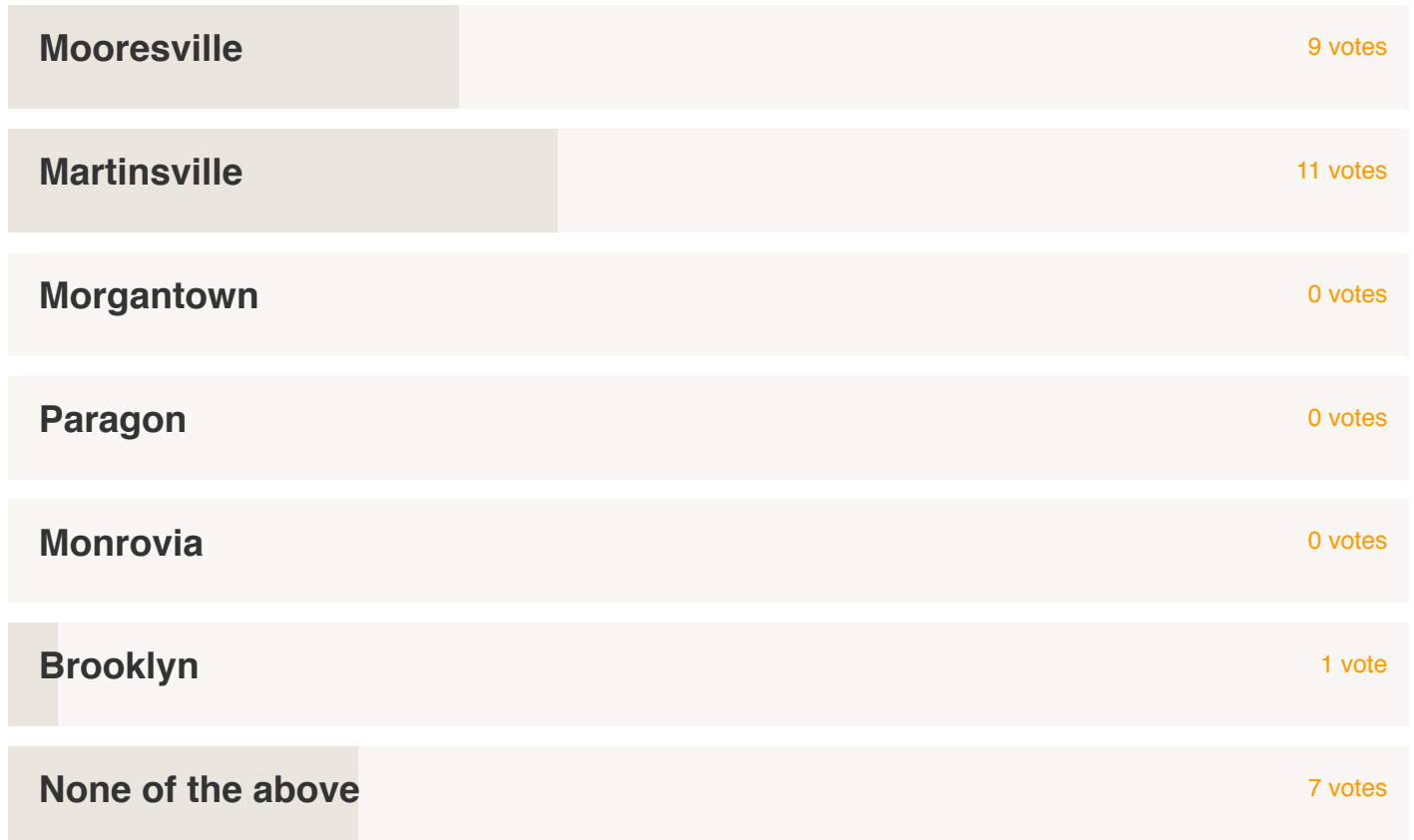
Question 19

How long have you lived in Morgan County?



Question 20

My household is within the corporate limits of:



Question 21

Do you have any additional comments or concerns?

.

?

Good survey format

I visit BCP sometimes 1x week-seasonally. Have waited 35 yrs. for a nature park in our county! Always had to travel to nearby counties. Keep creating green spaces, trails, nature parks, etc. With youth & adults so plugged in to technology--research overwhelmingly shows for balanced mental, physical, emotional, & spiritual health we need natural areas, unstructured play outdoors, and time to just "be"! Model your nature parks after Sodalis & McCloud Park in Hendricks Co. Have variety of parks.

If we are going to do it do it the very best we can to save money down the road

In order to continue to grow as a community we MUST expand our parks system. When I travel to surrounding communities I notice that their parks are a lot nicer than ours. When people are considering where they will move parks factor into that decision. I would like to see the community grow and thrive. To accomplish this I feel we really need to expand our parks and rec activities around Martinsville and attract new families.

It is critical that we get kids out into nature. The more parks with activity opportunities we have the better.

Like I said we need more places for us horse owner to go to and ride and camp ..so we can spend or money here . And than other people would be here to to use the camp site to.

Sad to see all the drug deals, vandalism, and trash that people do in the parks. Thanks for taking my input and we volunteer when we can. WE LOVE PARKS. They are so vital!!!

Safety. Keeping out drugs etc

Thanks for asking!

The park that was created at Burkhart creek is a blasphemous example of what not to do at a park. The trail, and shelter house was ill-conceived an a waste of money, lets hope the same mistakes are not made at future parks in Morgan county. Use professional help when creating a park area so its done right.

There has been much progress in the past years on raising awareness to the needs in the parks. Thank you for making this a priority area in the county!

We need a dog park.

Appendix D

Public Meeting



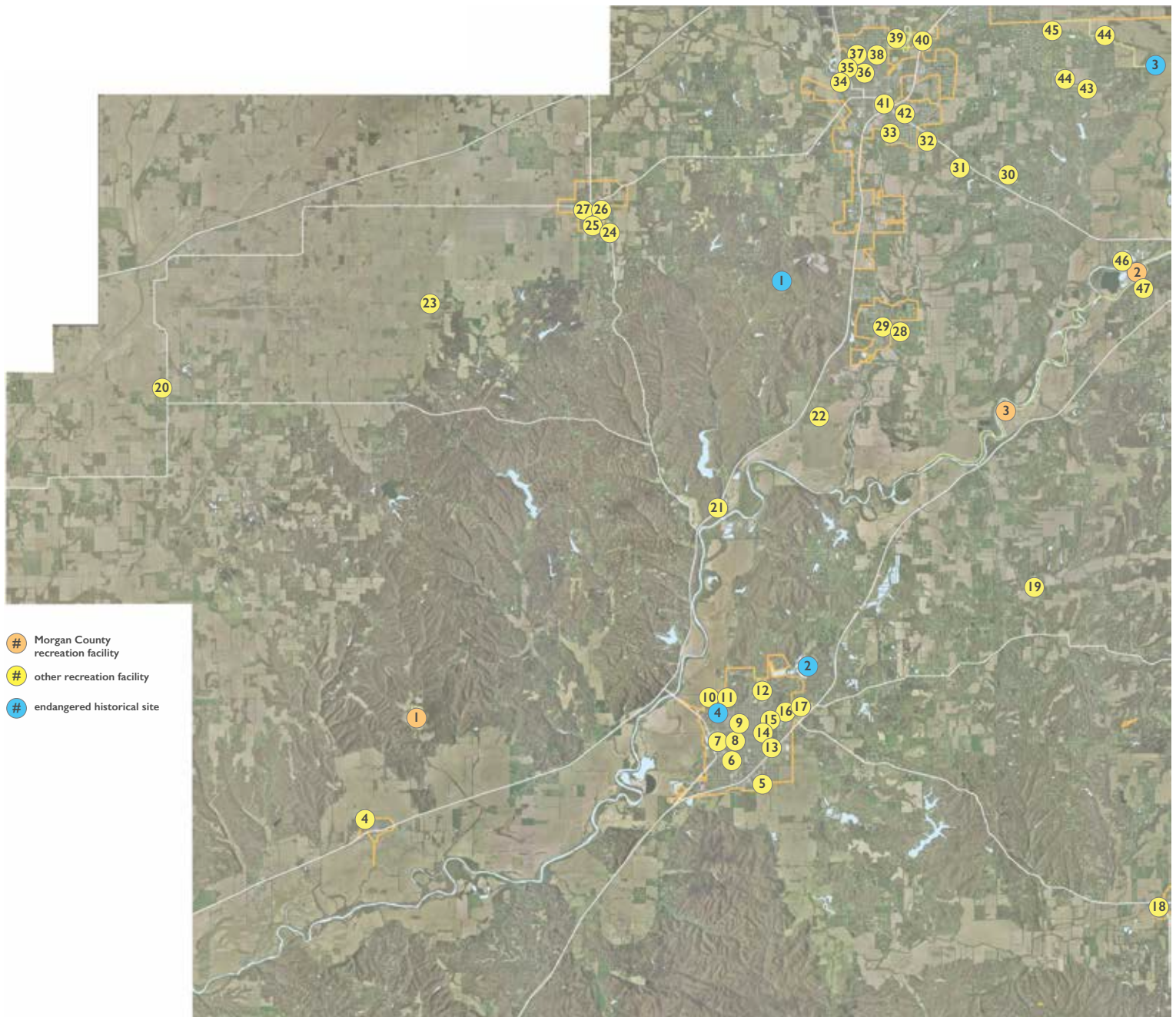
Appendix E

Base Map



Park and Recreation Facilities in Morgan County

The map below shows the parks and other recreation facilities that are located in Morgan County. Facilities are primarily clustered in and around population centers, which are bounded by orange lines. Numbers on the map correspond to the numbered list on the following page. Existing and proposed County park facilities are indicated by the orange dots on the map. Morgan County's ten most endangered historic sites are indicated by the blue dots on the map.



1. Burkhart Creek Park
2. Waverly Park
3. Harris/Starlight Park (proposed)
4. Paragon School Trail
5. South Elementary School
6. Poston Road Elementary School
7. Doris Daily Park
8. Martinsville West Middle School
9. Central Elementary School
10. Merritt Park
11. Walter Martin Park
12. Jimmy Nash Park / Martinsville City Park
13. Martinsville High School
14. Charles L. Smith Elementary School
15. Martinsville East Elementary School
16. Morgan County Fairgrounds
17. Barbara B. Jordan YMCA
18. Morgantown Town Park
19. Green Township Elementary School
20. Eminence Elementary & High School
21. Martinsville Public Access Fishing Site
22. Centerton Elementary School
23. Hall Elementary School
24. Monrovia School Fitness Trail
25. Monrovia Elementary School
26. Monrovia Jr-Sr High School
27. Monrovia Organized Softball & Baseball
28. Brooklyn Park Trail
29. Brooklyn Elementary School
30. Mt. Gilead Path to Wellness

31. Ashbury Park
32. Mooresville Christian Academy Trail
33. Rooker Run Park
34. Newby memorial Elementary School
35. Paul Hadley Jr High School
36. Mooresville High School
37. Northwood Elementary School
38. North Park
39. Pioneer Park & Trails
40. Grace Church Community Fitness Trail
41. Old Town Park
42. Neil Armstrong Elementary School
43. North Madison Elementary School
44. Landersdale Trail
45. The Links at Heartland Crossing
46. Waverly White River Public Access Site
47. Waverly Elementary School

ENDANGERED HISTORIC PLACES

(list to be revised for final draft based on update from the Morgan County Historic Preservation Society)

1. Goethe Link Observatory
2. Grassy Fork Fisheries
3. William Landers Farm
4. Martinsville Sanitarium
5. Pioneer Cemeteries
6. ?
7. ?
8. ?
9. ?
10. ?

Appendix F

Waverly Park Plans and Concepts





VIGNETTE 1: TOWN SQUARE



VIGNETTE 2: MAIN STREET



